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## THESIS

THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY'S  
SECURITY DILEMMA:  
OSTPOLITIK WITHIN US-SOVIET DETENTE

by

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September 1985

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The Federal Republic of Germany's Security  
Dilemma: Ostpolitik Within US-  
Soviet Detente

by

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ABSTRACT

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## I. INTRODUCTION

A word for all seasons, detente has come to symbolize the mode, and mood, of East-West relations since the late 1960's. Originally restricted to the sphere of US-Soviet global strategic issues, this term has definitionally evolved over time from a rather limited application to a convenient and comforting pallative for public consumption. Specifically, a tactic designed for the conduct of international relations has been generally equated with the goal itself of those relations. Additionally, the content of the expression has varied situationally, with national inflections characterizing the demands placed upon detente. These factors of time, political inclination, degree of political awareness and nationality have all contributed to the present situation of "detente confrontation" within the West. The implications of this controversy for NATO are significant in that they create opportunities for Soviet exploitation to further weaken cohesion within the Alliance.

In its three and a half decades of existence, the Atlantic Alliance has been in a state of crisis with remarkable regularity. From forward defense, through the rearming and entry of the Federal Republic of Germany (FRG) into the Alliance, to flexible response and modernization,

this disparate collection of countries has nonetheless exhibited the ability to eventually agree upon a unified response to the common threat of possible Soviet military aggression in Western Europe. The latest crisis to affect NATO, however, is of a different nature than the previous ones that produced a unified closing of the ranks.

The detente policy adopted as the preferred framework for the conduct of relations with the East has been the source of many a recent intra-Alliance disagreement. Thus the irony that, although detente represents an attempt to reduce tension with the foe, internal dissent over pursuit of the policy has strained relations among the friends. Criticism has even extended to the point of asserting that US detente actually blurred the lines of distinction between allies and enemies [Ref. 1: pp. 20-23]. Thus a self-chosen political modus vivendi has adversely affected Alliance cohesion to a degree never yet achieved by an external military threat. This conflict of opinion within the Western camp on the issue of detente with the Soviet Union has been most clearly, and perhaps shockingly, manifested in US relations with its erstwhile "model ally", the FRG.

Germany has proven historically to be the crucial factor in the establishment of a stable European security system. Since "both world wars and the Cold War broke out over the issue of what Germany's role in the international

system should be" [Ref. 2: p. 102], the division of that country reflects to a significant extent the determination of the victorious Allied Powers of World War II to preclude the future development of a potentially disruptive power in Central Europe. At the same time, however, and all stability-inspired intentions to the contrary, discord between the USSR and the three Western powers responsible for the ultimate settlement of the German question has ensured the continued existence of a legitimate national grievance in the heart of Europe.

Due to their vital geostrategic location, both the FRG and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) have of necessity served as the military fulcrum for, respectively, NATO and Warsaw Pact operational planning. Until recently, the complete dependence of the FRG on NATO for the provision of its security needs had sufficed to ensure at least minimal commonality with Alliance, i.e. American-sponsored, policies. The present lack of detente consensus with Bonn is quite understandably of special concern to Washington. In spite of Adenauer's successful efforts to solidly and unambiguously unite West Germany's fate with that of the West, the recently demonstrated determination to pursue a more regionally-based independent foreign policy vis-à-vis the USSR has predictably raised spectres of either another Rapallo or a united but neutral Germany. Given the enormity of the stakes involved, and Joffe's contention

that Germany has only turned to the East when either humiliated or deserted by the West, [Ref. 3: p. 721] that country could conceivably once again become the focus of embittered US-Soviet relations.

Largely responsible for the collapse of Allied consensus after Potsdam, Germany became the quintessential expression of East-West confrontation. The rivalry of two antagonistic social systems was initially staged almost exclusively on the German scene. It was, and remains, the only terrain where massive US and Soviet armed forces directly confront each other. The world's attention was more than once riveted on West Berlin, the most vulnerable point of Western defense. Isolated 110 miles inside the GDR, the Soviets repeatedly subjected the city to harassment and several spectacular displays of pressure politics in efforts to force Allied withdrawal.

A focus of acute East-West competition, Germany represented the great economic and political prize, the partial control of which neither the US nor the USSR has been willing to relinquish for a reunification of unpredictable consequences. Thus, with the advent of detente as an announced "era of negotiations", one could logically have expected Berlin and the German question to have been high priorities on the superpower agenda. But did a successful resolution of these German issues weigh equally in Washington-Moscow deliberations to establish



a climate of relaxed tension? How did each define success and what, if attained, did it represent for the conceptualized view of the probable future structure of a European security system? Or, to use Hassner's phrasing, "the real question is: what kind of Germany can be fitted in what kind of Europe and what kind of world?" [Ref. 4: p. 7] Amid all the confusion of definition and controversy of interpretation surrounding US-Soviet detente, an extra dimension was added to the attempts by the superpowers to answer Hassner's question: implementation of the FRG's own detente policy with the East (Ostpolitik).

During the first two decades of its existence, the FRG had contented itself with reliance on US determination of NATO's Eastern policy. Yet for years "many voices in both Washington and London seem[ed] to favor a more active role for the Federal Republic. They wish[ed] to avoid constant criticisms and to induce the Federal Republic to assume greater responsibility for its future". [Ref. 5: p. 212] Couched within that recommendation was the admonishment to accept political realities and adopt a more reasonable negotiating stance vis-a-vis the East. In 1969 Bonn accordingly overcame its previous reluctance to pursue detente by initiating a full-fledged program of normalization with the East.

As a prerequisite for its new Eastern policies, the FRG had had to engage in its own "agonizing reappraisal" of operant political assumptions. In effect the superpower detente impetus had seemingly greatly altered Bonn's existing international framework of reference. Specifically, no longer able to depend on Alliance support for its revisionist claims, the FRG faced an acute dilemma: how to continue pursuing the goal of German unity with the leading power in the Western alliance declaring the status quo the highest maxim? [Ref. 6: p. 113] What modified conceptual factors were therefore necessary to accommodate the development of an Ostpolitik in consonance with overall NATO interests? How did the formulation devised take into account national goals, i.e. what has been the FRG's response to that structural question of "what kind of Germany in what kind of Europe"? And yet more importantly, what effect has Ostpolitik had on West German relations with Washington and Moscow?

This thesis attempts to answer the above questions by investigating the impact of detente on the German question. In order to better appreciate the interplay of forces responsible for events, background considerations of a politico-cultural nature, general detente concepts and detente expectations specifically concerning the German question will be presented for the US, USSR and FRG. The political results for the FRG of a West German Ostpolitik conducted within the context of an overarching US-Soviet

detente will then be discussed. The concluding chapter will detail the unanticipated and, potentially, unwanted consequences for NATO of detente policy regarding the European security order. It sets out alternative futures for Europe in terms of American tutelage, West German ascendancy or Soviet hegemony.

Because of West Germany's importance to NATO and previous Alliance, and especially US, preoccupations about its foreign policy activity, the focus throughout is oriented more toward the FRG than either of the superpowers. Given US-European disagreement on Soviet policy and the fact that Bonn has been the object of great pressure from both Moscow and Washington due to Ostpolitik, a greater awareness of the goals motivating and constraints operating on the FRG is essential to limit detente damage within NATO. In treating the behavior of the three governments, the emphasis is on contrasting the significance ascribed to the German question in terms of international structure and national security interests, and on the ultimate aims of each government. These aims have been grounded in the underlying assumptions of divergent political cultures that created varying, and even antithetical, Weltanschauungen. In the final analysis, incompatible images of the international order and of national roles within it combined with asymmetrical regional interests to impart a vastly differing significance to the still unresolved German question.

## II. US DETENTE

### A. BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS

The international system that developed immediately after World War II differed tremendously from that which had previously structured world affairs. Two victorious Allied Powers, the US and the USSR, emerged as undisputed leaders of antagonistic groupings of states. Although experiencing a time lag in some respects, the dilemmas facing the US were essentially similar to those encountered by the USSR and have therefore characterized post-war relations for both countries. The scope and nature of responsibility required of the US as champion of Western values in opposition to those of the communist East created challenges unprecedented in American history.

The first novel aspect of this era has been the necessity of dealing with an adversary on a permanent basis, i.e., a long-term competition with no end in sight. Possession of credible military deterrents, especially in the form of nuclear arsenals capable of destroying most of mankind, has precluded employment of the traditional method of conflict resolution, i.e., war. A second new element involved the extent of commitment required. The US was called out of its traditional isolation to guard against a perceived communist threat on a global scale. London's announcement in 1947



that it was no longer able to guarantee the territorial integrity of Greece and Turkey signaled the de facto collapse of pax Britannica well in advance of the official withdrawal from East of Suez inherent within the 1966 decision to build no new carriers and phase out of service those in existence in the early 1970s. [Ref. 7: p. 4] The US thus had to assume that maritime duty. Finally, a third factor concerned the protection of allies, this too on a permanent and global basis. This consideration of having to conduct adversary relations within the constrictive framework of allied needs and desires tremendously complicated an already daunting task. Given the above constraints on policy formulation, the US developed and implemented the strategy of containment in an effort to curtail the growth of Soviet influence.

In its most basic and pure form, containment sought to guarantee militarily national sovereignty and provide economic assistance to countries threatened by communist aggression. Support of nationalist forces was deemed the surest form of defense against communist intervention. The US accordingly had to identify the geographic areas vital to its own strategic interest and invest resources as needed to construct a point defense around the USSR. It was not an original intention to "reform" or influence the internal affairs of any state. Variety of governmental form per se was not something inherently inimical to the world order

that the US was seeking to establish. "The United States could coexist with, even benefit from, diversity; what was dangerous was the combination of hostility with the ability to do something about it." [Ref. 8: p. 31]

The belief in goodwill and "friendly persuasion" to modify Soviet behavior had been dashed on the realities of Eastern Europe. Containment attempted to grapple with the problem from a more realistic foundation:

In essence, the official view of Soviet behavior and how to deal with it consisted of several logically related propositions which fused the newly discovered ideological insights with traditional realpolitik:

1. For historic, ideological, and intended political reasons, the Soviet Union seeks to "fill every nook and cranny in the world basin of power" (in Kennan's words).
2. Soviet leaders exercise the expansionist propensity persistently, opportunistically, realistically, and cautiously, with particular concern to avoid using their armed forces except to maintain control over countries behind the Iron Curtain.
3. The essential and feasible objectives of the United States, therefore, is to contain Soviet expansion by building "situations of strength" (as Acheson put it) and being prepared to exert countervailing pressure by force and other means at constantly shifting geographical and political points.
4. Successful containment, in the long run, will lead to the moderation of Soviet behavior, Soviet willingness to negotiate settlements of conflicting interests, or possibly the collapse of the Soviet system and its East European empire. [Ref. 9: pp. 5-6]

A dual function was performed by economics as both informer of many of the underlying political assumptions responsible for detente policies and instrument of implementation for the same.

First and foremost a commercial country, the US, as the world's leading market economy, had the largest stake in maintaining global stability. Profitable trade being absolutely dependent upon sure markets and uninterrupted access to raw materials, it was essential to institute a pax Americana to fill the void left by the British. This form of national existence dictated US preoccupation with peace, defined as lack of conflict, and political stability, defined as the status quo. The impact of this commercialism was reflected, however, not only in life style but also in societal values. A product of the Enlightenment, American culture absorbed much more of that intellectual movement than merely classical economic theory.

The quest for peace as a function of sustaining the status quo could most effectively be pursued by a realpolitik of the classical European model. The associated concept of balance pervaded early American political thought and expressed itself most notably in the system of "checks and balances" characterizing the country's governmental structure. The inherent element of calculation struck a responsive chord in a country of pragmatism. Certain that rationality reigned in both the universe and the human mind, a sense of control over one's destiny imbued American culture with the confident belief in the ability to find an ever "better" way.

Application of the practical and maintenance of the successful, while simultaneously searching for improvement, optimistically defined a progress both attainable and eternal. The unremitting requirements of the continuously new and demonstrably efficacious fostered traits of impatience, a demand for immediacy and a low tolerance for the permanent. The operant philosophical framework was therefore one of generalities, all of which were subject to modification or rejection.

Applied to foreign relations management, the American belief in the primacy of common sense was amenable to a policy of compromise and negotiations as a means to regulate conflicts of interests. This approach was also a mechanistic view of problem-solving, one which suited the American temperament and allowed for an expected rational and reasonable solution of differences. Cooperation, mutual benefits, quid pro quo, confidence building measures and goodwill were associated concepts of vital significance. Yet all force of compelling logic to the contrary, the US has refused to wholeheartedly embrace a strategy of realpolitik. As Pipes has noted, "it is probably true to say that no country has ever exceeded the United States in its loyalty to that principle which on the conscious level it finds itself unable to accept." [Ref. 10: p. 12] Since attitudes and conceptions responsible for pragmatic policy



decisions often ran counter to other more ethically-oriented convictions, balance-of-power considerations frequently collided with a belief in the efficacy of economics itself as a "civilizing agent".

Marked by an unmistakable strain of moralism, America has always reserved a sense of aversion to the "dirty" politics of Europe. Harboring a conviction of the innate superiority of its own institutions, those being the end product of that search for the "better way", it seemed but natural to export that success. In the course of time, liberal government and domestic well-being had become inextricably linked in the collective mind. Growth, progress and even degree of civilization had come to be measured by the yardstick of standard of living enjoyed by the general public. The crucial prerequisite for economic health was, of course, political stability. These deeply ingrained assumptions resulted in the willingness to finance the Marshall Plan and informed the expectation that improvement of living conditions would foster a commensurate liberalization of the political order. Often contradicting official disclaimers of eschewing international interference and ignoring de Tocqueville's well-documented observation "that existing orders are most threatened when conditions improve, rather than the other way around", [Ref. 8: p. 278] these views not infrequently led to incoherent policy decisions.

Although the unacknowledged power politics considerations generated an uncomfortable malaise, the belief nonetheless persisted that the greater the sway of Western, i.e., American, values and their stabilizing influence, the less opportunity available for the destabilizing presence of communism. These fundamental elements formed the ideological building blocks from which containment strategy was constructed. Whether one agrees with Gaddis' assertion that the Nixon-Kissinger detente was primarily the old containment in a new guise [Ref. 11: p. 359] or with Hoffmann's contention that such an evaluation was too superficial and misleading [Ref. 12: p. 236], what emerged clearly gave the impression of a new US stance vis-à-vis the USSR. And like its policy predecessor, detente theory held the attraction of combining the novel with the idealistic, thereby giving evidence of Schlesinger's observation that "no paradox is more persistent than the historic tension in the American soul between an addiction to experiment and a susceptibility to ideology." [Ref. 13: p. 1]

## B. GENERAL THEORY AND GOALS

If it is true that the most powerful thing in the world is an idea whose time has come, 1969 was the propitious moment for American detente initiatives. Fundamental international and domestic changes had occurred in the

decade of the 1960s that could no longer be managed within the operant conceptual framework. A thorough re-evaluation of the inherited containment theory was undertaken and, as had been the case with every administration since the Truman years, was appropriately modified to correct the mistakes of the immediate predecessors. The "era of negotiations" announced by Nixon represented a new mix of a few basic recurring themes that had previously been combined in differing proportions according to varying lists of priorities, thereby marking changing US perceptions of the preferred containment methodology and its own capabilities to manage the Soviet threat.

In its essential points, the world of 1969 was very different from the one of the Truman Doctrine.

1. New centers of power had developed in Western Europe and Japan that had created the prerequisites for a relationship to the US founded on partnership.
2. New nations had been formed in other parts of the world and had developed sufficient self-confidence to accept a larger share in the provision of their security and economic development needs.
3. The monolithic communist bloc of the Stalin period had become a loosely coherent grouping of states, over and above which a deep split had been opened between China and the Soviet Union.
4. In the last three decades the Soviet Union had risen from a position of military inferiority to parity with the US and even superiority as regards several important weapons systems.
5. The bipolar world of the 1940s and 1950s had given way to, within restrictions, a multipolar one.

6. New problems were transcending the geographical and ideological borders of the past to create an increasing interdependence of nations.

Above all, however, the Nixon Doctrine reflected the conception that the strategic-technological-economic dominance of the US was ended. [Ref. 14: p. 628]

Although much was said about multipolarity and partnership, especially the increased allied/client role in assuming responsibility for assisting in maintenance of international stability, the most salient issues for the US concerned Soviet military capabilities and Soviet expansionist activities. Thus, from Washington's security perspective, the world remained very much a bipolar one and policy revisions adjusting to the new balance of power obtaining in that area had to be quickly formulated.

The Vietnam imbroglio had created domestic political consensual and credibility crises that demanded speedy resolution. Budgetary considerations imposed by the war likewise necessitated a re-evaluation of the global "policeman" role that the procurement of relatively cost-effective nuclear weapons funded by Keynesian economics had once seemed able to support. It was primarily prosaic constraints of this sort rather than a purely theoretical doctrinal desire to consciously limit the scope of national interests that precipitated outlining a strategy based on de-emphasizing previously employed instruments of policy while incorporating other means of control. The shift to a stress on negotiations



and on expansion of trade and cultural exchanges was designed to compensate for the decreased military role forced on the government by the disillusionment associated with the Vietnam conflict. To cover this retrenchment, innovative official justifications for the reliance on treaties as a suitable substitute for military power and presence were not lacking.

The main task of the Nixon-Kissinger detente was to formulate a coherent foreign policy that would take into account the altered international power ratio while adequately safeguarding America's strategic interests. "At a high level of abstraction, the United States has sought three broad goals in its relationship with the Soviet Union: avoiding nuclear war; containing the spread of Soviet power and ideology; and gradually encouraging change in the nature and behavior of the Soviet Union." [Ref. 15: p. 325] Successful in the first goal, the second and third were sought via the tactic of linking treaties in the area of security affairs with agreements of an economic and technological nature.

Given the inescapable logic of deterrence theory and mutual assured destruction capabilities, it was assumed that modern states had no sane alternative to cooperation.

"American leaders tend to view international relations in a highly optimistic and voluntaristic fashion. It is often assumed that cooperation and harmony-rather than conflict and hostility-are the natural state of international politics and that once unnecessary



impediments to friendship among nations are removed (like misunderstanding, miscommunication, or political leaders who are insufficiently responsive to the yearnings of their people), peace will reign." [Ref. 16: p. 306]

The USSR was to be slowly drawn into the existing world order and would therefore cease for reasons of self-interest to pursue its destabilizing interventionist policies.

Reliance on the commercial factor as an effective "carrot" in this strategy reflected a valid asymmetrical approach to containment as well as a more dubious expectation that, once the Soviet economy had been penetrated, "consequent embourgeoisement of foreign policy" [Ref. 1: p. 23] would follow ipso facto. The entire process envisioned maneuvering the USSR into a position of self-imposed self-restraint.

Even though it was not anticipated that the ideological character itself would be transformed, Soviet revolutionary activity was expected to be curbed by pragmatic status quo considerations. Hoffman has pointedly summarized the purpose of detente, on a less high level of abstraction, as "the major part of an ambitious world policy that tried to force the Soviet Union, through a network of linked rewards and punishments, to play the role assigned to it by America's leaders in a 'stable structure of peace' that would have preserved America's primacy and ensured the triumph of its very conservative notion of stability." [Ref. 12: p. 231] Beneath all this hopeful theorizing about social scientific methods of behavior modification lay the uncomfortable fact

that it was simply not feasible to continue dealing with the USSR from the customary "positions of strength".

As mentioned earlier, nuclear superiority was no longer an advantage enjoyed by the US. Since any viable foreign policy had to take into account that primary structural reality, acceptance of the USSR as a member into the world economic system had to be correspondingly accompanied by recognition of its claim to military equality. By granting this point of prestige and at the same time implying the satisfaction of imputed motivational security needs, it was thought that the drive to overtake a rival leader would be blunted. Since "the arms race has no winners," attainment of parity would create the proper psychological basis conducive to mutually beneficial strategic arms limitation talks (SALT). Also, as noted by Aspaturian, "the idea was that if the United States voluntarily accepted the Soviet Union as an equal strategic power, the Soviet Union would reciprocate by accepting military parity as a terminal goal and refrain from interventionist behavior in the Third World." [Ref. 9: p. 23]

By the ploy of channeling Soviet ambitions constructively into "the system", the US planned to control them to its own advantage and thereby procure a greater degree of global stability. At the heart of this line of reasoning about parity was "America's faith in the efficacy of the balance-of-power principle. . . . The hope behind this

gamble seems to be that once a nuclear equilibrium between the two powers has been obtained, a dynamic and therefore potentially explosive situation will defuse and turn static." [Ref. 10: p. 13] All of these threads of thought, status quo, multipolarity, strategic balance, national interest and stability, converged for the US in the geopolitical area of single most vital concern outside its own territory: Europe. Viewed in the most conservative terms possible, what held for the continent did doubly so for Germany.

#### C. THE GERMAN QUESTION

In his State of the World address of February 18, 1970, Nixon "distinguished NATO from all other commitments since 'Europe must be the cornerstone of the structure for a durable peace.'" [Ref. 17: p. 151] Unlike the fluid and often ambiguous situation in the Third World, a long acknowledged and clearly discernible division into spheres of influence has dictated superpower relations in the European setting. In both its ideological crusade to counter communism and its undeviating determination to define stability in terms of the status quo, America's Soviet policy has focused on protecting its European allies. Although legally obligated to work toward German unity on the basis of self-determination, the issue had in reality been relegated to rhetoric well before Nixon took office.

Scene of unrelenting Cold War tension and undisputedly the most aggrieved party in the postwar "settlement", the resolution of Germany's unsettled political fate was originally considered the key to a lasting European peace arrangement. The source of instability was perceived in terms of conflicting political wills. Washington and Moscow being equally aware of the crucial geostrategic significance of Germany and therefore unwilling to sacrifice control over "its" part for the sake of questionable reunification schemes with unpredictable consequences, maneuverability toward a political solution of the problem was non-existent. The resultant stalemate, however, came to be an enduring concern only for the FRG.

Western enthusiasm for the task of creating a viable political alternative waned perceptibly over the years with the failure of a Soviet invasion to materialize. Although publicly supportive of Bonn's interests, many within the Alliance remembered that NATO functioned as a means to integrate and thereby control a potentially dangerous resurgent Germany as well as a collective defense against possible Soviet aggression. A strong, unified Germany had not been realistically considered compatible with their national interests by most European states, including the USSR. [Ref. 2: p. 105]. Thus, "in a system where two German states exist, the twin goals of guaranteeing their security and of restricting their freedom of action, of

preventing them from being friendly to the point of .  
reunification and hostile to the point of war, is [sic]  
achieved most satisfactorily by the presence of Soviet  
and American troops." [Ref. 18: p. 23] Slowly the  
attitude of shared responsibility for fulfillment of the  
de jure Alliance contractual goal of German reunification  
gave way to a tacit acceptance of and preference for the  
status quo.

In 1955 Eisenhower had asserted that "while that division  
[of Germany] continues, it creates a basic source of  
instability in Europe. Our talk of peace has little meaning  
if at the same time we perpetuate conditions endangering the  
peace." [Ref. 19: p. 12] After erection of the Berlin Wall  
in August 1961, Kennedy could flatly state that "Germany  
has been divided for sixteen years and will continue to  
stay divided. The Soviet Union is running an unnecessary  
risk in trying to change this from an accepted fact into a  
legal state." (Emphasis added) [Ref. 20: p. 399] Having  
established its dominant role within the Alliance, and  
hence in European affairs, as well as successfully limiting  
Soviet territorial gains to those claimed as spoils of war,  
the US was reluctant to tamper with an obviously stable  
situation. In this regard Washington was in full agreement  
with Adenauer's early slogan of "no experiments".

This reversal of opinion on the source of a threat of  
European peace was clearly evident already in 1959 when



"the West, in consenting to discuss Berlin's status separately granted implicitly that instability derived from circumstances other than the lack of a general German settlement." [Ref. 19: p. 28] After the Cuban crisis of 1962 Americans became preoccupied with strategic arms issues and means of avoiding superpower "miscalculations." In many Western minds the political arrangement in Europe had become reliably dependable and therefore permanently acceptable, even if not morally respectable. Kennedy spoke for many when he remarked in 1963 that "Berlin is secure, the Europe as a whole is well protected. What really matters at this point is the rest of the world." [Ref. 19: p. 44] The somewhat surprising aspect to all this was the persistently and therefore unavoidably hypocritical adherence at the public level to the old, official rationale. As late as 1967 in the NATO Harmel Report the 15 allies asserted that

no final and stable settlement in Europe is possible without a solution to the German question which lies at the heart of the present tensions in Europe. Any such settlement must end the unnatural barriers between Eastern and Western Europe, which are most clearly and cruelly manifested in the division of Germany. [Ref. 21: pp. 87-88]

The attitude of a sealed fate and the need to move on to more important global matters became accepted US doctrine and was faithfully continued by Nixon and Kissinger.

"In 1969, impatience with the rigors of the Cold War was pervasive in the West. All leaders were under pressure to demonstrate their commitment to peace; . . . Western governments had been maneuvered into the position of feeling obligated to prove their goodwill in East-West relations." [Ref. 22: p. 403] To prevent becoming isolated within the Alliance, the FRG felt constrained to begin normalizing relations with the East. Having exchanged reunification for a de facto acceptance of the territorial status quo as the precondition to these negotiations, Bonn dutifully complied with NATO, and especially US, detente urgings. To preserve Alliance unity Kissinger considered it essential to pursue an indivisible detente in Europe by "establishing clear criteria to determine its course. . . . The Soviets must entertain no hope of dividing the Alliance by selective detente with some allies but not with others." [Ref. 22: p. 403] This concern was especially acute with regard to the execution of West German Eastern policies.

Fearful that an increased nationalist sentiment could be sparked, Kissinger was determined to control the flow of events and coordinate developments according to his own schedule. As seen from the Soviet viewpoint, "an accommodation directly between Bonn and Moscow would carry with it the additional dividend of excluding the United States from the solution of a major European problem, setting a precedent that might cause other Europeans to

look increasingly to Moscow, rather than Washington." [Ref. 22: p. 259] To preclude realization of that danger, linkage was employed as a tactic whereby West German ratification of the proposed Moscow Treaty and the convening of a European Security Conference were made contingent upon the conclusion of a satisfactory agreement on Berlin. In that fashion the US "harnessed the beast of detente" [Ref. 22: p. 534] and safely ensured the continuation of the status quo. By confining itself to the single issue of Berlin, the only point of direct responsibility vis-à-vis the USSR, the US demonstrated that it "was primarily interested in stabilizing the global balance through arms control and conflict muting rules of superpower politics; Washington was thus less interested in structural change à la CSCE or regional arms-control measures à la MBFR." [Ref. 23: p. 237]

US participation in the opening phases of CSCE and MBFR was much more the result of falling a victim to its own linkage strategem than a reflection of genuine desire. Although CSCE held a humanitarian appeal and MBFR proved a means to counter Congressional pressure for unilateral troop reductions as well as to offer the prospect of equal security at less cost, little political value for contributing to the establishment of the new East-West detente relationship was envisaged for those regional forums.

In large measure the primary US motivation was to appease West European sensitivities on those issues. Thus an appearance of consensus was presented to the East and Washington was in a position to monitor events and, if necessary, exert a directing influence (e.g. US refusal to support the West German attempt to use MBFR "to link the United States to the problem of negotiating the military aspects of European security in an East-West setting." [Ref. 24: p. 405]) Soviet refusal to negotiate on terms acceptable to the West produced stalemated MBFR talks. Well before the CSCE Helsinki Accords were signed in 1975, the bloom had left the detente rose for Washington. The US was simply much more preoccupied "with the rest of the world" (above all, Vietnam, but also its bilateral relationship with the USSR and the opening to China) to devote great attention to European affairs. Its insistence on an indivisible detente, however, additionally represented an attempt to restore stability within the Alliance itself.

Ironically, Kissinger claimed that Washington itself had "risked being isolated within the Alliance and pushing Europe toward neutralism" [Ref. 22: p. 403] if it had proven reluctant to pursue detente. Although the relative positions of leadership within the Alliance, distribution of military strength and degree of political leverage available still favored the US, a worry about isolation indicated an undeniable weakening of American authority. In spite of

statements about multipolarity and partnership, of pleas for European political unity and the acceptance of greater military "burden-sharing", the US was in reality reluctant to relinquish, or significantly share, its leadership role. An indivisible detente was a tactic that

favours American control over the direction of developments with global consequences. It is the continuing commitment to hierarchy and centralized control, the assumption that only through hierarchy and centralization can stability be assured. . . . A conception of indivisible detente based on hierarchical and centralized control amounts to a major revision in the organization of the stereotyped world order, not its demise. Kissinger is an adaptive conservative, not a radical. His policy of detente is an attempt to maintain the central management of the two alliance systems in an international environment that has experienced a major change since 1970. [Ref. 25: p. 8]

Linkage and indivisible detente succeeded in obtaining the US goal of reaching an agreement on Berlin, but they did not survive the withdrawal of active American participation from the continuing European detente initiatives. Having protected their limited regional interest, Kissinger and Nixon were content to leave the remaining details and growing momentum of regional detente to the Europeans. Berlin was once again safe.



### III. SOVIET DETENTE

#### A. BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS

The immediate post-war period left the USSR at a relative military and economic disadvantage vis-à-vis the US while simultaneously presenting it with analogous political challenges. Ideologically prepared to deal with an adversary on a permanent basis, and indeed requiring a lasting foe, Moscow was actually in a somewhat better position than Washington for coping with that situation. Likewise the issue of alliance leadership was more directly solved by the simple expedient of installing puppet governments supported by Soviet occupational forces. Yet because of their weakened condition of economic exhaustion and severe manpower depletion, as well as still developing a nuclear capability, the Soviets could not lightly dismiss Western reaction to their oppressive actions in Central and Eastern Europe.

Determined not to allow free elections in those territories, Stalin relied upon a combination of bellicose threats and forces operant within the West itself to protect the Red Army from attack by its recent allies. Exaggerated estimates of Soviet capabilities and the vision of "red hordes" being unleashed in Central Europe should Stalin be unduly provoked proved sufficiently

self-deterring to preclude further military action for the sake of occupied territories. Although distrustful of Soviet intentions, war-weary Western governments were obligated to heed the public demand for immediate demobilization, thereby removing the means with which to dislodge Soviet forces. Granted that reprieve, Moscow exploited the opportunity presented to firmly establish its presence in Central and Eastern Europe, rebuild its economic base and expand its military capabilities, to include development of a nuclear force. Thus, while the US was devising and implementing its containment strategy, the USSR was concentrating on consolidating control over its hard-won territorial gains and redressing the superpower military imbalance. Peaceful coexistence was the tactic selected to provide the breathing space necessary to achieve those goals.

Unlike their American counterparts, Soviet policy-makers have never confused detente with entente nor equated a relaxation of tension with either a reduction in the means to pursue conflict or a resolution of the causes of that conflict.

Soviet authorities have gone to great lengths to explain that peaceful coexistence is not a formula for preserving the status quo, for achieving a balance between East and West or a power parity between the US and the USSR, for "bridge-building", for interrupting or alleviating conflict and struggle, or for anything of the sort. The Soviet authorities have endlessly stressed that peaceful coexistence is, rather, a formula for action under contemporary conditions. [Ref. 26: p. 6]

As a method for conducting foreign relations, the concept dated to, and hence derived its legitimacy from, Lenin's approval of "peaceful cohabitation" with capitalist countries. It was always made clear, however, that the measure was a mere expedient to allow time for consolidation of the Party and strengthening of the Soviet state vis-à-vis the "imperialist enemy". "The Leninist concept was explicitly intended as a maneuver to cope with a particular situation at a particular time. . . . As a tactic, Lenin considered the Soviet peace policy as subject to instant change." [Ref. 26: pp. 15, 21] Analogous to Stalin's situation after World War II, Lenin's after World War I demanded a peace policy to ease Western suspicions of Soviet intentions and thereby permit national recovery. In both instances that limited goal was achieved. Unlike Lenin, however, Stalin placed far greater requirements on peaceful coexistence than those of merely domestic concern. A previously defensive tactic was employed offensively to achieve foreign policy goals.

The Czech coup had precipitated the common Western European military response to a perceived Soviet threat that culminated in the 1949 formation of NATO. The Berlin crisis of 1948 and the Korean War of 1950 had forged a unity of will very much not in Soviet interests. A prime goal of the USSR, however, was to foster disunity in the West for the eventual purpose of removing the US presence.

An even more pressing security requirement was the prevention of West German rearmament. Whenever threats proved ineffective, or actually counterproductive by reinforcing the Western image of an aggressive Soviet regime, Stalin began to switch tactics abruptly and plead a desire for peaceful coexistence. The apparent lack of coherence in this strategy helped to confuse Western governments about true Soviet aims, thereby beginning to erode the consensus concerning the very nature of the threat itself. Furthermore, "if Stalin was correct that the foreseeable future would more likely witness tension among capitalist countries rather than discord between East and West, then it was logical to cultivate relations with each Western capitalist nation separately." [Ref. 27: p. 96] Any weakening of the ties between Alliance members was to be encouraged via bilateral agreements in order to inhibit the impetus toward Western unity. The political benefit gained thereby was supplemented, however, by a military payoff.

Peaceful coexistence was expected to provide the screen that would permit military modernization and buildup. Nuclear weapons procurement was an important and steadily pursued goal, although first priority was not assigned to nor a strategic employment doctrine formulated for such systems until the post-Stalin years. Under the cover of the peace program conventional forces were substantially

expanded to counter opposing NATO troops. Very much aware of the political significance of military power,

Relaxation of tension suited this military purpose, especially if it "softened up" NATO by doing what Malenkov had indicated so significantly in his August 1953 inaugural address: If today, under conditions of tension in relations, the North Atlantic bloc is rent by internal strife and contradictions, the lessening of this tension may lead to its disintegration. [Ref. 27: p. 97]

An even earlier and more explicit statement on the correlation between peace initiatives and military modernization, and the ultimate purpose of both, was provided by Manuilski in 1931:

Until the attainment of complete military superiority we will start the most dramatic peace movement that has ever existed. There will be electrifying proposals and extraordinary concessions; the capitalist countries, stupid and decadent, will be working with pleasure at their own destruction. They will be lured by opportunities for new friendships. [Ref. 28: p. 202]

A sense of urgency, deriving from conditions other than the threat posed by NATO, provided further impetus to the drive for military expansion. An immediate requirement for large operational forces existed in Central and Eastern Europe as the result of successful wartime expansion.

The German capitulation of May 8, 1945, left the Red Army in control of vast stretches of European territory that had to be rapidly integrated, by force if necessary, into the socialist camp. A militantly messianic movement, Soviet communism was committed to capitalism's defeat and wasted no sentimentality on the question of expansion by conquest.



Stalin appealed, however, to security interests as a more acceptable justification for the continued presence of occupational forces:

One may ask . . . what can be surprising in the fact that the Soviet Union, in a desire to ensure its security for the future, tries to ensure that these "countries" of Eastern and Central Europe should have governments whose relations to the Soviet Union are loyal? How can one, without having lost one's reason, characterize these peaceful aspirations of the Soviet Union as expansionary tendencies . . . ? [Ref. 26: p. 8]

How indeed? As Pipes has warned, "Nothing can be further from the truth than the often heard argument that Russia's expansion is due to its sense of insecurity and need for buffers. . . . As for buffers, it is no secret that today's buffers have a way of becoming tomorrow's homeland, which requires new buffers to protect it." [Ref. 19: p. 70] What initially appears as incomprehensible interpretations of "peaceful aspirations" and "expansionary" can be better understood from a consideration of the Russian historical experience.

It was no historical accident that Marxist-Leninist communism developed in Russia. Marx and Engels both identified a characteristic trait that marked the country as fertile ground for adoption of the new social theory.

Like many other observers, Karl Marx noted that from the time of Peter the Great Russian foreign policy showed a general tendency not merely to expansionism, but to "unlimited" power. He put this even more strongly in a speech of January 1876, when he spoke of Russia's lodestar being "the empire of the world". Engels, too, wrote of her "dreaming about universal supremacy". They were referring not to any fixed plan, a wholly explicit intention, but rather to the spirit and character of the Russian State. [Ref. 29: p. 733]

The supranational aspect of communism appealed to a sense of special mission, thereby providing a more appropriate justification for an imperial drive. Thus "Marxism, the most internationalist of nineteenth century ideologies, has merged with Russian nationalism, their synthesis being Soviet communism, which is internationalist in form and nationalist in essence". [Ref. 30: p. 3] An ideology, be it religiously, economically or philosophically based, can only flourish, however, in an environment where the requisite social preconditions have already evolved.

The immense expanse of the Russian heartland was subject to both harsh climatic conditions and numerous invasions by conquering foes. The inhabitants were forced to subsist under conditions that often reduced life to a basic struggle for mere survival. These circumstances formed a characteristic view of the world whose accompanying values have as significantly motivated the behavior of the Kremlin as the idealism and liberal philosophy of the Founding Fathers have that of Capitol Hill.

Russian society developed under the triple constraints of unfavorable geographic conditions, strict Greek Orthodox religiosity and the rigors of serfdom. Spared the mitigating influence of the Enlightenment, mankind was viewed as inherently evil and in need of external controlling authorities. Secular institutions were expected to provide the guiding framework within which individual responsibility

and initiative were almost completely curtailed. The common man was not only unable to control himself but was even unable to ascertain how to lead life properly. Hence the complete intolerance for chaos, i.e. the absence of concentrated ruling power effectively controlling the political process.

Decisions, whether at the local village or the highest national level, were of a corporate, secretive, unanimous and authoritarian nature. The vast majority of the Russian populace

had few if any legally recognized rights, were tied to the soil, and did not own the land they cultivated. They managed to survive under these conditions not by entrusting themselves to the protection of laws and customs, but by exercising extreme cunning and single-mindedly pursuing their private interests. . . . These various elements of historical experience blend to create a very special kind of mentality, which stresses slyness, self-interest, reliance on force, skill in exploiting others, and, by inference, contempt for those unable to fend for themselves. Marxism-Leninism, which in its theoretical aspects exerts minor influence on Soviet conduct, through its ideology of "class warfare" reinforces these existing predispositions. [Ref. 10: p. 72]

The Russian economic experience also reflected the above traits.

In spite of a remarkable industrial growth during this century, the economy as a whole has remained largely self-enclosed. Although self-sufficiency could be viewed in a positive light, it has nonetheless preserved a fundamentally agrarian-style system, with all the attitudes and habits pertaining thereto. Rather than seeking compromises of

mutual benefit, as a commercial experience would suggest, those familiar almost entirely with only the production of goods conceived of gains solely in terms of another's losses. The concept of exchange was very much framed in terms of a zero-sum transaction. That zero-sum perception of individual relations, however, was likewise manifested at the level of foreign relations and was indelibly imprinted on the Russian definition of state security.

Constantly threatened by surrounding antagonistic neighbors, the Russian state centered on Moscow developed as a nation while simultaneously incorporating those opposing peoples. Thus a steady expansion via complete integration within the homeland has marked centuries of Russian growth. The diplomatic expertise garnered in this fashion was characterized by the attitude of elitist superiority derived from administering subject states, not by one of mutual respect from dealing with equally sovereign ones.

A country whose governing apparatus has learned how to deal with foreign peoples from what are essentially colonial practices is not predisposed to think in terms of "a stable international community" or of "the balance of power". Its instincts are to exert the maximum force and to regard absorption as the only dependable way of settling conflicts with other states, especially those adjoining one's borders. [Ref. 10: p. 9]

The sensed need to control bordering areas in all directions was reflected in the concept of equal security.



A feeling of safety could be provided only from a military capability equal to that of all possible enemies in combination. The search for absolute security therefore encompassed both foreign and domestic, real and potential, challenges. Once again, the element of control was of crucial significance. A hostile international force beyond its own control definitionally posed a threat to the continued existence of the Soviet state. [Ref. 31: p. 7] The military sense of vulnerability was compounded by a historic feeling of social and technological inferiority vis-a-vis the West.

Russian attitudes toward Europe, and especially Germany, have always been of a contradictory nature. The desire to emulate a culture perceived to be superior was reflected in early efforts to forcibly "modernize" Russia. Juxtaposed against that tendency was the ethnocentric drive to pursue and preserve a uniquely Russian way of life. The mutually exclusive sets of beliefs embodied within these two schools of thought, the conflict between "westernizers" and "slavophiles", imparted an ambivalent character to Westpolitik that has yet to be resolved. This tension reflected, and reflects, itself in emotive dichotomies of fear-envy, need-resentment and fascination-rejection.

In foreign policy behavior, the dual track of cooperation-antagonism gave evidence of this fundamental and continued sense of psychological insecurity. Not



surprisingly, security issues were the primary motivating impetus for Soviet pursuit of detente in the late 1960s. All the formative influences presented above, both historical and social, were of decisive importance for the determination of goals and methods.

#### B. GENERAL THEORY AND GOALS

With attainment of nuclear parity, the USSR was finally in a position to claim treatment as an equal from the US and the proper deference from lesser powers. The official acknowledgement of superpower status would permit a legitimate voice in all global affairs. US containment could at long last be definitely broken, allowing for the resumption of traditional expansionist activity. Soviet influence, under the banner of ideological imperatives to spread the benefits of socialism, could be increased on a broad scale with minimal risk. These new global opportunities combined with more long-standing regional concerns to launch offensive activity on many fronts.

What made 1969 so decisive for East-West relations was the change in the relative "correlation of forces" obtaining at the world level. On the one hand, border conflicts with China added a note of urgency to Soviet Westpolitik. At the same time and in spite of having proven previously unreceptive to detente overtures emanating from Moscow, an essentially retreating US was

forced to treat with an advancing USSR. To capitalize on the advantage of the moment and provide an official content for conducting his program, Brezhnev transformed peaceful coexistence from a short-term tactic, subject to immediate revocation, to a long-term strategy of "irreversibility".

Since the very raison d'être of the Soviet system requires state enemies and revolutionary socialist progress, the possibility of a lasting peaceful coexistence with "imperialist" countries had to be carefully defined. It was therefore emphasized that the overriding necessity of avoiding a nuclear war did not compromise the ideological struggle, nor would the latter be held hostage to the former. As stated in a 1970 Kommunist editorial:

The policy of peaceful coexistence in its Leninist understanding signifies neither the preservation of the social or political status quo, nor the moderation of the ideological struggle. In fact, it has facilitated and facilitates the development of the class struggle against imperialism inside individual countries as well as on a world scale, and has created a favorable climate for the affirmative solution of economic and social problems. [Ref. 26: p. 119]

From this it could be seen that, contrary to some critics of Soviet ideology, the Kremlin had not altered its long-term goals but merely adopted short-term means and tactics to take into account the constraints imposed by nuclear weaponry.

The general idea was that the "inevitability" of a cataclysmic superpower confrontation would be foresworn for the sake of interaction at a less intense level of

competition. Economic benefits, financial credits and technology transfers were avidly pursued, but that in no way obviated the inevitable demise of the capitalist system. Although the fruits of the "other" social system were willingly imported and SALT I was advantageously concluded, the fundamental motivational forces remained at odds with those of the US. "Such concepts as parity and stability do not play an important role in either determining the structure of Soviet process or formulating the Soviet approach to arms control negotiations."

[Ref. 31: p. 41] The basic drive in Soviet policy was to foster instability, not to preserve the stable international order required by Western economies. Concentrating on two areas, the Third World and Europe, peaceful coexistence was paradoxically pursued in the former in a visibly de-stabilizing fashion while assuming the guise of a status quo initiative in the latter.

Soviet statements had always insisted that peaceful coexistence was "the antithesis of a commitment to international stability." [Ref. 32: p. 19] For that reason "progressive" wars in Third World countries were "just" and eligible for Soviet support. Increased activity in those areas of former Western rule was intended to improve the Soviet image as a bona fide leading force in international politics and further the cause of socialism. There was also a denial strategy operant to prevent

continued Western access to raw materials and markets. Although increased Soviet activity was anticipated in the Third World, the West was unprepared for, and unable to reconcile with its own vision of peaceful coexistence, the frequently substantial military assistance given.

"Inasmuch as the Soviet concept of peaceful coexistence refers only to the absence of general war between the two world camps, and specifically between the USSR and the US, Soviet spokesmen do not regard the employment of violent means in the 'progressive' revolutionary struggle as inconsistent with the Soviet definition of peaceful coexistence." [Ref. 26: p. 76] This apologia served to justify the more aggressive nature of policies in the Third World. As dramatic and significant as Angola and Ethiopia was, Europe was the most important arena of conflict due to its security implications. Enticing global forays were a rather pale and secondary concern in comparison with the regional dictates associated with the German question.

### C. THE GERMAN QUESTION

Of supreme importance for Soviet security interests was official recognition of the European territorial status quo. For centuries Russia had been deeply involved in Central and Eastern European affairs, as well as traditionally seeking a greater degree of influence in the

Balkans. The Allied intervention after World War I and the nearly fatal events of World War II reinforced Soviet distrust of the West and confirmed the dictum that security was a function of direct control exerted through integration. From Moscow's viewpoint, the territories gained by right of conquest had to be firmly, and preferably legitimately, anchored in the socialist camp. That, in conjunction with the division of Germany, were the overriding goals of Soviet European policies in the effort to prevent another repetition of the World War II scenario.

Failure of the West to acknowledge Soviet hegemonial rule tacitly encouraged unrest in those countries. Although a NATO attack for the sake of "liberation" was highly improbable, hopes remained alive within those areas that Western assistance might arrive after local resistance had developed. Given that more than once "events since World War II have taught them that even communist countries cannot be trusted unless they are under direct Soviet control", [Ref. 33: p. 582] leaders in the Kremlin could not content themselves with anything less than official acceptance of the status quo. For that reason the primary motivation for Soviet "detente" was the desire to gain Western recognition of the political and territorial status quo obtaining since 1945. Toward that end an all-European security conference, whereby public sanctioning of the permanent Soviet presence could be obtained, had



long been a major political goal of Moscow. To achieve that defensive objective, however, Soviet policy had to offensively negotiate with the West on the point of central concern for both sides: Germany. And of all the allied countries involved, the one whose cooperation and approval was essential to the overall success of the initiative was the FRG itself. For the Soviets, the German issue was inextricably intertwined with the larger European one.

"The focus of Soviet policy toward Western Europe was and remains Germany. The main preoccupation since 1945 has been to contain West Germany and control East Germany, to solve the German question, and to prevent Germany ever again from threatening the U.S.S.R. militarily or politically." [Ref. 34: p. 93] Maintaining the division of that country appeared the most feasible means to accomplish those aims. Working to isolate the FRG within NATO would serve to exacerbate internal Alliance tensions as well as limit West German influence on policy decisions. For the USSR the German question represented central political issues in several dimensions and was therefore defined differently than in the simple Western formula of possible reunification.

Firstly, assuming that Germany would remain divided, fear of an eventual revival of German nationalism with its probably "revanchist" theme made West German recognition of post-war national borders imperative. Secondly, Germany was the key to Western European integrative efforts.

"In the Soviet perception, the Federal Republic of Germany is the crucial political factor in Western Europe. Both NATO and the European Community (EC) are seen as groupings that would not be viable without West German participation." [Ref. 35: p. 31] For the sake of increasing its own influence, the USSR sought to impede progress toward Western unity by encouraging pursuit of individual, national interests. The tactic of bilateralism was designed to weaken Alliance cohesion by fostering in Western Europe "a kind of crisis of identity, a gradual erosion of self-confidence that will prompt the countries of the area to seek an 'accommodation' with Moscow." [Ref. 36: p. 148] In the German case, negotiations associated with Ostpolitik were of special value in this respect. Lastly, and perhaps most importantly, Germany was the prime target for the attempt to remove, or at least severely curtail, the US presence in Europe.

"The Soviets made no secret of their expectations that one of the results of detente should be a certain loosening of the ties between the US and its Western European allies." [Ref. 37: p. 62] While geostrategic concerns (e.g. forward defense) and other political factors (e.g. the French withdrawal from NATO's integrated military structure) dictated concentration of NATO forces in the FRG, Soviet manipulation of West German sentiments regarding possible deleterious consequences of their unquestioning loyalty to

Alliance directives could prove very profitable. By stressing European solutions to continental problems, the USSR hoped to divert Western European attention from Washington toward Moscow. The press campaign to picture a peaceful and reasonable Soviet interest in all European affairs was designed to call into question the necessity of NATO's continued existence. Thus, although peaceful coexistence portrayed a superficial willingness to honor the status quo of acknowledged state borders and spheres of influence, that appearance did not imply an acceptance of the existent political and social arrangements as a permanent feature of the European system. It did, however, provide the basis for initiating subtly subversive policies intended to eventually normalize relations with the West.

As noted by Steibel, "'normalization' is a favorite Soviet word, developed in the Berlin crises and implying acceptance of Soviet conditions for settlement." [Ref. 38: p. 26] Allied occupation of Berlin has been a completely intolerable "abnormality" for the USSR. It was also the most vulnerable point in the Alliance defense and as such subjected to continual interference and harassment. Manifestly fearful of the potential danger a reunified Germany would present, periodic proposals to "normalize" that situation via the scheme of a unified but neutral Germany could only have been extended in the belief of being able to exert a controlling influence after Allied

troops had been withdrawn. The most "abnormal" aspect of the European system was, of course, the presence of American troops. Having failed to dislodge them with either threats or offers of conferences, Moscow decided to change course.

Both Stalin and Khrushchev had been fond of alternating scare tactics with pleas for peaceful cooperation. Having learned the lesson that the former were counter-productive and the latter distrusted, a consistent application of the peace program was adopted. In the mid-1960s a concerted effort was made to alter the Soviet image and convince the West of Moscow's friendly intentions. Part of this plan entailed increased bilateral relations with West European countries to encourage "Western Europeans' willingness to negotiate directly with Moscow, rather than as hitherto, let the US speak on their joint behalf." [Ref. 37: p. 62] By refraining from dire predictions of capitalism's imminent demise and public displays of violent behavior, Khrushchev's successors struggled to revise the common conception of Soviet leaders. The purpose of this tactic was two-fold. While the direct political benefit of fostering complacency in the West was significant in its own right, the second intent was to deflect attention away from the Soviet military buildup taking place. Convinced that genuine Western goodwill was definitionally impossible,

the only truly reliable source of security would continue to reside in military capability.

Europeans have always been much more sensitive to the political uses of military power than Americans. By 1969 nuclear parity had succeeded in forcing a redefinition of the US-Soviet global relationship. At the same time an even more perceptible change was effected in the European theater.

The broader aspects of detente were conducive to the belief that Moscow no longer, if ever, harbored aggressive designs against the West. The individual Western European states, the Kremlin thus calculated, should become less nervous about the Soviets' intentions, while at the same time growing more impressed with Soviet power and skeptical about the US ability to guarantee their security. [Ref. 37: p. 62]

The altered power balance at the regional level combined with peace propaganda proved to be a highly successful calculation in formulating a means to "normalize" relations with the West. The avidly desired all-European security conference was agreed to by the West and successfully concluded in Helsinki in 1975, with far-reaching implications for European security.



#### IV. WEST GERMAN DETENTE

##### A. BACKGROUND CONSIDERATIONS

Whatever vague and differing conceptions the Allied leaders entertained regarding a German peace settlement, the actual sequence of events that unfolded did not correspond to anyone's expectations. Unresolved disagreement on German policy and mutual distrust of ultimate intentions among the occupying powers rapidly crystallized into general East-West confrontation. Overshadowed by the intensity of this antagonism and the higher priority attached to avoidance of superpower armed conflict, the prospects of imminent German reunification faded quickly. The tragedy for Germany of that failure to cooperate was most poignantly reflected in the unrelenting process of integration into the Western and Eastern systems, a process predicated upon division. For the Western zone, however, it was a highly fortunate occurrence.

In order to counter effectively the perceived Soviet threat, the Western alliance needed the active political, economic and military support of the Western zones of Germany. In practical terms this meant the abandonment of the original visions of a punitive program in favor of a pragmatic course of quickly rebuilding the economy and restoring political order. Rather than political isolation,

acceptance of the defeated as an equal was demanded. Thus West German participation in the Marshall Plan was permitted and occupational controls facilitated restoration of the political stability necessary for recovery and adjustment. Also, an often historically subterranean stream of liberalism contributed to the transition to democracy required for acceptance into the Western community. Integrative projects in all areas functioned, however, on two levels: to encourage European recovery and unity, and to create an interlacing system of checks on possible future German militarism.

Although the FRG became an essential member of the Western camp, the lingering fear of revived German nationalism necessitated the negative aspect implicit within the integrative arrangement. Yet the development of the Cold War forced the implementation of a new approach to dealing with a defeated enemy. Thus "rehabilitation" via enforced acceptance of one's own political and social forms displaced the traditional retaliation policy. Integration as an "enmeshing" mechanism (i.e. a structural constraint on policy and therefore unilateral action) for the purpose of control substituted for the more familiar policy of disarmament. This fundamental construct justifying West German integration later resurfaced in Western detente expectations vis-à-vis the East.

Although Bonn's Eastern policy has witnessed drastic changes since 1949, several factors have remained constant irrespective of the government in power. Three core points in particular provided the unwavering basis from which later policy changes were effected.

Anti-communism was an unquestioned assumption within both elite and public considerations. A united and communist Germany has never been an attractive option for the FRG. Not only was such a course initially precluded by Allied controls and occupation, but the West Germans themselves demonstrated a consistent desire to remain a part of the free West. The second, and closely related, point was the logical outcome of this attitude.

Integration with the West has formed the foundation of all West German foreign policy. Again, one could argue that little choice in this matter was allowed the FRG by the Allied Powers. Yet an SPD-sponsored (Social Democratic Party) alternative put forward during the early years emphasizing reunification over integration was defeated at the polls. [Ref. 39: pp. 26-27] Political and economic advantages to be gained and dependence on others for provision of basic security needs were determining criteria in 1949 and remain valid to the present. Thus uninterrupted support for Western integration has characterized Bonn's policies from Adenauer ("The defensive power of the free world organized under NATO safeguards peace and preserves

the tradition of our peoples. The security of America and Europe is today indivisible." [Ref. 40: p. 61]) through Brandt ("We are loyal partners of the Atlantic Alliance and energetic advocates of West European unity." [Ref. 41: p. 147]) to Kohl ("They [the Alliance and European Community] guarantee our security and freedom." [Ref. 42: p. 665])). Although reunification was subordinated to state security interests, it has remained the ultimate goal of all foreign policy, both Eastern and Western policies being pursued in terms of German policy. This third core issue therefore centered on the relationship with the GDR.

Due to the lack of free elections in the GDR, the ruling SED (Socialist Unity Party) has been considered an illegitimate regime by the West. Bonn has consequently refused to grant de jure recognition to the East Berlin government. That hard line has handicapped the improvement of relations with the GDR, yet official acknowledgement of the existence of the other German state as a separate nation would most likely close the door on any hope of eventual reunification.

These three guidelines, then, have been common threads forming a consistency of policy orientation. During the immediate postwar period, a "policy of strength" was pursued vis-à-vis the East.

From 1949-1969, Ostpolitik under CDU/CSU (Christian Democratic Union/Christian Social Union) leadership

accurately reflected prevailing Western ideas. In that respect the policy could be considered a mere product of external determining factors. Yet at the same time, those concepts initially concurred with domestic West German threat perceptions and consequent attitudes toward the East. Not until the government was unable, or perhaps unwilling, to keep pace with emerging demands of an altered set of international circumstances did the consensus within NATO and the FRG itself begin to show strain.

The main conventional premises associated with the confrontational approach included the following:

1. Only with the collapse of Soviet domination could the division of Germany and Europe be ended. ("Schroeder [Foreign Minister in the Adenauer and Erhard governments] does not think in terms of a sustained modus vivendi with the states of Eastern or Southeastern Europe. Rather a modus vivendi is an instrument to weaken the communist Soviet domination, whose end is the prerequisite for the inclusion of those states in a united Europe representing its own interests." [Ref. 43: p. 95])
2. The Soviets were still pursuing an original master plan of conquest against the FRG. ("The responsibility for the division rests unambiguously solely on the USSR. It possessed from the beginning a master plan for the conquest of all Germany." [Ref. 43: p. 54])
3. Only a strong Western deterrent force could check aggressive Soviet intent. ("Peace is only vouchsafed by deterrence." [Ref. 43: p. 50])
4. Since the GDR was a mere creation of the USSR, the FRG claimed sole right of representation for all German interests. By regarding the assumption of diplomatic relations with the GDR by a third country an unfriendly act against itself, Bonn tried to extend its own non-recognition policy to the international level (the so-called Hallstein Doctrine). ("The international progress of Pankow . . . [has]



remained exceptionally small." "We have pursued a line of policy that consisted of enforcing as much as possible throughout the world the right of sole representation of the Federal Republic for all Germany." [Ref. 43: p. 113])

5. Detente with the USSR that excluded a solution of the German question was unacceptable since the status quo represented the primary source of European political tension. ("We say 'yes' to detente, if at the same time steps are taken to settle the causes of tension-also and especially in Germany. We say 'no' to everything that could consolidate the status quo." [Ref. 44: p. 56])
6. Detente with the USSR was likewise impossible if it led to recognition or even an upgrading of the status of the GDR. ("Detente measures that lead or would lead to the recognition or revaluation of the Soviet zone would prejudice the claim for self-determination for all Germans. They would therefore not be reconcilable with President Kennedy's recently described proviso." [Ref. 44: p. 64])

Kennedy's "peace strategy" and Brzezinski's theory of East European nationalistic divergence from Soviet hegemonic control, with their implications for Ostpolitik, could not be held back by Bonn. To counter growing isolation within its own alliance, Bonn responded with a "policy of movement" to establish trade missions in East European states and a "policy of small steps" to begin negotiating agreements with the GDR aimed at improving human contacts between the two German states. Although limited progress continued along these lines, room for maneuverability within the CDU/CSU was highly restricted. Schroeder openly spoke out in 1965, for example, in favor of dropping the Hallstein Doctrine vis-a-vis Eastern Europe and resuming normal

relations with those states. Resistance in the cabinet, however, was far too strong to permit a meaningful move to that degree. [Ref. 45: p. 70]

Detente did have a place in West German foreign policy, but only in a very restricted sense. Since both Ostpolitik and Westpolitik have been subordinated to Deutschlandpolitik, detente was calculated to create an improved atmosphere that would induce the USSR to relax its demands on the German question. Recognizing that a climate of great tension was not likely to lead to reunification, Bonn hoped that a less defensive Moscow could be influenced to modify its policy on the issue.

In order to defend himself against charges of having missed chances at progress on the German question by refusing to consider Soviet offers of negotiation (a distrust of intent obvious in the statement that "naturally we must not judge the Soviets by their words but rather by their actions" [Ref. 44: p. 57]) while simultaneously moving toward the East, Schroeder justified his program as the means of working toward a single, immutable goal: change of the status quo in Central Europe in the direction of a reunification of Germany according to the Western model. [Ref. 43: p. 138] From both Allied as well as Soviet views, however, West German intransigence on its own demands for a settlement proved unsatisfactory.

Domestically, in addition to being too little too grudgingly granted, this "policy of small steps corresponded only to the most urgent requirements of the moment and gave no answer to the question of the long-term new orientation of West German politics." [Ref. 45: p. 113] Although spoken in 1963 in a different context, Schroeder's own words identified the reason for the break with the confrontational platform: "a standstill can never lead to a positive change in the status quo." [Ref. 44: p. 60] This dominating theme of nationhood was rooted in strong historical patterns of a search for national identity and political unity. Historical factors also explain a general European hesitation to restore a larger measure of self-determination to Germany.

At the heart of the controversy surrounding the "new" West German attitude toward the East lay "old" suspicions of German untrustworthiness and disloyalty to the West. Some feared an eventual repeat of the Weimar experience or a Rapallo-like intent, wondering in this if democracy had ever taken root in the FRG. Such superficial analogies indicate an unfamiliarity with the historical development of Germany, the specific episodes mentioned and the special circumstances prevailing in postwar Germany.

The principles of democracy were neither unknown nor unsupported in the Weimar period. Since, however, the content of any particular historical moment finds its substance in the joining of present circumstances with past

experiences, the factor of timing was crucial for determining the course of events following each World War. The origins of liberal democratic concepts, as well as those associated with and in opposition to Ostpolitik, have a historical basis fashioned within a unique politico-cultural context.

Located in the center of the continent, the German-speaking area of Central Europe has been repeatedly subjected to devastating wars. In particular, the trauma of the 30 Years' War and its concluding Peace of Westphalia in 1648 were crucial for the subsequent development of German history. The political settlement imposed by the terms of the peace treaty created a mosaic of over 300 states, each jealously guarding its own right of existence while breeding narrow, provincial attitudes. The explicitly admitted conviction that a fragmented, and therefore weak, central region was essential for balance of power on the continent can be traced to this early date, although that condition has characterized Germany's political reality since the 11th century A.D. Not until the late 19th century, when Bismarck forged a unified Germany, albeit a "small" one excluding Austria, was that assumption challenged. In the meantime, the privileged position of the ruling class was not only ensured by treaty in 1648 but also further entrenched by two other factors.



As a consequence of the destruction of the bourgeoisie, "an absolutist state of official authorities and civil servants became the main bearer of progressive improvement. A single rule held sway: any citizen desiring to rise higher and even partially obtain respect and material security had to become an official in the service of this state of authorities." [Ref. 47: p. 156] Additionally, the psychological impact of the war effected a reinforcement from below of this tendency to consolidate rule by the state.

The average German citizen demanded only that the government guarantee his physical security against domestic disorder and foreign invasion. Obedience to established authority was thus exchanged for personal safety. Law and order, not individual liberties, were the requirements of the day. Until Napoleon once again demonstrated German powerlessness, this willingness to accept authoritarian rule remained operant. Thus "insistence that social order depended upon undeviating obedience to existing authorities" [Ref. 48: p. 23] realistically corresponded to prevailing conditions in Europe. Although these attitudes survived beyond their usefulness into the 20th century, the governmental form they supported did not remain immune from attack by a rival structure.

Due to its central geographic location, Germany served as the cross-roads of the continent, both in terms of trade



and the exchange of ideas. The body of thought associated with the Enlightenment offered an alternative to the authoritarianism of the status quo. Although the revolutions of 1830 and 1848 ended in failure, they nonetheless gave indication of elite awareness of liberal democratic ideals. Also, even though such ideas were not embodied in political parties actively functioning in a genuinely democratic state, individual rulers were influenced to varying degrees by "enlightened" precepts. With the passage of time a slowly increasing number within the citizenry likewise became supporters of liberal government. In discussing the failure of these liberal rebellions, Craig contrasts the Western "idea of a constitutional government, responsive to an educated and self-reliant citizenry whose rights were clearly defined and protected" with the German emphasis on "inner development of the individual and of the German nation as a unique cultural expression. . . . At the same time, their inward-directedness had induced them to leave the practical realities of existence and the decisions affecting the life and well-being of ordinary people in the control of the State and its agents." [Ref. 48: pp. 33-34] Of the two conflicting forces, the physical need for a strong, protective state took priority over the intellectual and spiritual yearning for realization of the self-reliant and democratic ideal.

Particularism, diversity, contradiction and tension between competing drives all describe a history that in reality defies simplification. The German experience could perhaps most aptly be characterized as one especially lacking in continuity.

This lack of continuity is evident in the lack of political continuity; it is evident in the lack of territorial continuity; it is also evident in the lack of a continuous intellectual substance; instead of those things there was an intellectual division with the conflict between Roman Catholicism and the Christianity of the Reformation, with the conflict between a national philosophy of ideal nationhood (nationale Heilsphilosophie) and experiential, historical inner strife. A dualism of politico-cultural impulses weave throughout German history and may well open the way to its perplexing dialectic of creative accomplishment and ruinous decline. Intellectual-political messianism in Germany was not used up in the process of political modernization-as was the case with neighboring peoples. Intellectual promise became compensation for political failure. [Ref. 49: pp. 24-25]

Unconditional defeat of the Third Reich and Allied occupation unequivocally severed the tie of continuity with traditional political forms. As outside forces later slowly changed the political confrontational environment surrounding the FRG, internal actors rethought the underlying premises supporting that original policy.

## B. GENERAL THEORY AND GOALS

More responsive to the new factors at work internationally, Brandt's SPD government elected in 1969 was able to put its detente program into effect rather quickly. This apparently rapid change of course was due to several factors. In the

first place, a transitional period had been in progress through much of the decade, especially during the preceding three years of the Grand Coalition (CDU/CSU and SPD). Thus the direction of Brandt's policy was neither a complete departure from that of the past nor a phenomenon that suddenly emerged full-blown. Secondly, essential preliminary groundwork for negotiating the Eastern treaties had secretly been accomplished prior to election to the SPD government. [Ref. 50] Thirdly, as has been noted earlier, the ideas now informing Ostpolitik more closely corresponded to those demanded by the attitudes prevailing in other Western governments. This fortuitous circumstance was crucial for enabling the new government to implement its program, some of which pre-dated the US-sponsored detente push.

In the role of opposition, SPD criticism of the CDU/CSU had originally focused on a perceived sacrifice of reunification prospects for the sake of Western integration. Much of that disagreement derived from the party's traditional aversion to the military, a sentiment conspicuously at odds with the antagonistic climate dominating Europe into the 1960s. Given this distaste for a peace order founded on military confrontation, SPD insistence on the need to develop a politically-based international system less reliant on armed force began early. After the rearming of the FRG and its entry into NATO in 1955, much of the logic of the anti-integration argument lost validity.

Even with defeat on that debate, however, the conviction that confrontation was certain to seal the division of Germany did not disappear. Under the guidance of two major exponents, Brandt and Egon Bahr, a concrete political platform emerged from a coalescing of new working premises. The re-evaluation of fundamental assumptions undertaken in the early 1960s was precipitated by one dramatic event in particular: the construction of the Berlin Wall in August 1961. Alliance acquiescence in that Soviet action gave early indication of a shifting Western attitude toward Soviet policy.

Allied agreement with Bonn's rationale that genuine detente depended on solving the German question was the indispensable foundation for the FRG's Ostpolitik. Although all NATO members were contractually committed to seeking German reunification and the signing of a peace treaty, the West in general and the US in particular conveyed even more unmistakably an unwillingness to work toward fulfillment of West German demands. "Voices in Washington, London, and Paris had accused Bonn of blocking East-West detente through insisting on the FRG's private conflict over reunification." [Ref. 51: p. 21] The harsh reality of a common goal become an individual one thoroughly eroded the existing foundation of Bonn's working premises. At the heart of this volte-face lay the now general Western conviction that Germany no longer represented the main source of tension in Europe.

The original expectation that the Soviet system itself would collapse from internal contradictions or, at a minimum, prove unable to maintain control over Eastern Europe was disappointed by the test of time. A more encompassing political detente with the East, one far exceeding mere "trade diplomacy", was inescapable if Bonn were to avoid isolation within NATO. Brandt recognized the need to deal with Moscow as early as 1961 when he drew the proper conclusion from a Kennedy statement that reunification could not be achieved against the will of the Soviet Union: "It would follow from this that, in order to achieve it, we must concern ourselves with improving relations with the Soviet Union." [Ref. 41: p. 70] These two external constraints, all but rhetorical Alliance default on its reunification policy and the need to negotiate with the USSR from the basis of the status quo, compelled the design of a new political formula predicated on detente while dedicated to achieving reunification.

The need to alter its Eastern policy to accommodate the West provided the immediate impetus for implementing Ostpolitik. As part of the overall NATO detente initiative, the SPD program shared several general concepts and goals with its allies. Firstly, the FRG had an undeniable interest in reducing the likelihood of war, especially a war most likely to be fought on its territory. The



motivation to improve relations with the USSR, and thereby (it was hoped) reduce the danger posed by the Soviet threat, was therefore very strong.

Secondly, and analogous in practice to the US formulation, the development of mutual interests across the ideological East-West border was regarded as the most appropriate tactic by which to attain the goal of reducing political tension. More philosophically subtle than the overtly pragmatic American thesis of economic enmeshment in the world system as the means to modify Soviet international behavior, Brandt appealed to peace as the elementary basic requirement of Germany, Europe and indeed the entire world.

Similar to the Soviet dialectic of evolving socio-economic systems, Brandt conceived of peace as the end product of a historical process. It was therefore much more than the absence of war, and mankind's desire for it arose from an impulse much deeper than the fear of war. Rather, peace was the ultimate achievement of historical forces moving in the development of progress.

In his speech before the German-Atlantic Association on September 10, 1969, in which he dealt extensively with future political developments, he emphasized the compulsory character of the relationship of progress and peace: "The compulsion toward progress, the impossibility of setting limits on scientific knowledge, the continuous competition between peoples, these will lead to a policy of peaceful settlement and will overcome many of today's tensions; it will be less a matter of national than of supranational problems." [Ref. 43: p. 150]

On the assumption that the USSR was necessarily striving for the peace just portrayed, measures designed to foster Soviet trust and willingness to cooperate with the West were promoted via Ostpolitik. Trade, credits and loans, technology transfer and scientific and cultural exchanges played a correspondingly large role in West German detente implementation. Especially great stress was placed on the value of human contact between the blocs. Although this too was in harmony with US theory on the anticipated beneficial results of personal contact for the purpose of breaking down walls of distrust and misunderstanding, Bonn's version of this facet was more nationalistic in orientation.

The possibility of improving the living conditions of the East German populace contributed tremendously to both the rationale for and support of Ostpolitik. Aware of the long-term nature of his policy for the establishment of a new relationship with the USSR, Brandt admitted that the "time would seem less long and oppressive if we knew that the lives of our people on the other side and our ties to them were made easier." [Ref. 41: p. 99] Until such time as a reunification could be realized according to a gradual convergence of mutual interests superceding ideological antagonisms, Ostpolitik was to function as the avenue of West German assistance to the GDR. Several modifications to then-current premises were necessary, however, in order

to provide a theoretical framework compatible with the proposed and greatly expanded new Eastern program.

Bahr's now famous formula of "change via rapprochement", first publicized in 1963, was founded on the preservation of existing military alliances for the purpose of ensuring the political stability necessary for that change. In its basic outline, this new approach ran counter to many of the ideas held by the CDU/CSU led government. In brief summary, the main points as they were expounded in his 1963 and 1973 speeches at the Evangelical Academy in Tutzing [Ref. 52] included:

1. Western Preconditions for the pursuit of detente contradicted the principles of detente and thereby hardened the confrontational attitude.
2. Any discussion of de jure recognition of the GDR was too narrow and perhaps even dangerous in that it led to a political Sackgasse.
3. An increase in East-West trade was in the interests of the West, and especially Germany.
4. Such trade would not alter the character of a communist regime, but the FRG was concerned primarily with the human dimension of easing the living conditions in the East. A material improvement would naturally have the effect of easing tension with the GDR.
5. The ideological conflict would be subordinated to overriding mutual interests. "Fruitful coexistence", the only viable option in a nuclear age, would slowly displace distrust and animosity, thereby reducing political tension and leading to a productive living together of all European peoples.
6. The FRG was mature enough to pursue its own national interests in this fashion.

Although vague about the precise form the resultant unified Europe would assume, or how it would actually develop, the SPD platform contained sufficient concrete points for policy implementation.

In keeping with the above, Brandt's government dropped Bonn's previous preconditions for negotiating with the East (while conforming, it might be added, to Soviet preconditions [Ref. 53: p. 869]) and concluded a series of treaties within a short span of time designed to normalize relations between the FRG and the USSR, GDR, Poland and Czechoslovakia. The financial, exchange and humanitarian programs were implemented as planned during the post-1969 period and have experienced an uneven but generally progressive development. Within these parameters Ostpolitik confirmed and worked from the basis of the status quo. Another important dimension, however, was dynamic in nature and revisionist in intent.

### C. THE GERMAN QUESTION

Within the collective framework of Western detente, the Brandt/Bahr program hoped to continue that work toward reunification seemingly interrupted by rejection of the confrontational approach. What Brandt announced as a "peace policy" and "policy of reconciliation", something apparently conducted primarily to counter allied charges of detente obstruction, revealed itself as a policy

addressed to considerably larger stakes, and to conspicuously German ones. "Reconciliation" with the countries of the East is simply the precondition and starting point for an active West German strategy designed to set in motion, and subsequently to shape, a complex and far-reaching process of change in Europe which will lead, at some as yet indeterminate point, to the restoration of the German nation. [Ref. 53: p. 875]

Proceeding from an early announcement that "the reunification policy pursued to date has failed", [Ref. 41: p. 68] Brandt insisted that "precisely because the German problem is so embedded in the relationship between East and West there is no hope for us if there is no change. Simple perseverance offers no prospects of success." [Ref. 41: p. 93] The conviction that change was not only essential but inevitable derived more from a sense of dynamic evolution than a simple disillusion with past policy. ("Whoever believes that the present unnatural situation can ever become permanent will find that this is an illusion." [Ref. 54: p. 30]) In short, bloc confrontation cannot be "history's last word." [Ref. 43: p. 153] The optimistic belief in the historical process to succeed where confrontation had failed nonetheless required active West German participation in seeking new forms of cooperation between East and West which could then be transferred to all of Europe. Thus the Brandt/Bahr belief that "the German questions can only be solved within the context of an all-European peace order" [Ref. 41: p. 201] was an effort to rally NATO support by recasting the FRG's "private concern" in the mold of a multilateral detente initiative.



Since Germany was the nation most directly affected by the bloc system, the FRG had a greater responsibility, a special mission as it were, for achieving "the goal of a European solution that would render the national solution superfluous." [Ref. 43: p. 149] This perspective required an emphasis on improving relations with the GDR as well as the USSR. Yet although Brandt stressed the need to progress from a "regulated state of living beside one another to one of living with each other" (ueber ein geregeltes Nebeneinander zu einem Miteinander [Ref. 44: p. 380]), official recognition of the GDR was impossible. ("Even though two states exist in Germany, they are not foreign to each other; their relations to one another can only be of a special nature." [Ref. 44: p. 381]) This concept of a "regulated state of living with each other" was valid for the long-term process of overcoming the entire East-West conflict. The proposed change of the status quo was to be accomplished by detente, yet did not begin from a rejection of the present bloc organization.

Referring once again to Bahr's Tutzing speeches, several additional points of significance emerge concerning reunification and security affairs:

1. The GDR could only be transformed with the permission of the USSR.
2. Any policy intended to directly overthrow the SED regime was doomed to failure. Detente must therefore aim at reassuring the ruling elite that its position of power was unthreatened.

3. Reunification would not occur as the result of a single historical act, but would be the end condition of a long-term process.
4. A system of common European security would slowly develop out of and beyond the existing military alliances.
5. Regional detente should be created by withdrawing nuclear arms from non-nuclear states and balancing conventional forces between NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

The new Ostpolitik initiated by Brandt has remained consistent in its basic thrust up to the present time. The current CDU/CSU-FDP government has been as obligated by domestic factors to continue the policy as its SPD-FDP predecessor was under Schmidt. In spite of repeated warnings against entertaining unrealistic expectations of rapid progress toward either the ultimate goal of reunification or the interim aim of substantially reducing the practical effects of the country's division, the achievements of Ostpolitik have left many in the FRG disappointed. Criticism has not been confined to dissatisfaction with Bonn's handling of the policy or the concrete results obtained, but has also extended to questioning some of the underlying assumptions motivating its formation.

## V. EVALUATION

### A. US-SOVIET DIMENSION

#### 1. General Comments

A recapitulation or in-depth analysis of the US-Soviet detente initiatives implemented since 1969 is far beyond the scope of this thesis. The disillusionment that had engulfed Washington by 1975 is well known. To a significant extent, American detente failures were largely self-inflicted. Mismanagement and conceptual flaws were weaknesses that hopeful expectations and wishful thinking could not alleviate. Much of the anger and bitter frustration experienced, however, was caused by a simple but persistent misunderstanding of Soviet statements.

Whether the result of mirror-imaging or the short-sighted expediency of vested interest, US misperceptions of peaceful coexistence were fateful. Not prone to the internal debate between pragmatism and morality that characterizes American foreign policy, Soviet political objectives are generally less ambiguously pursued and more reliably stated than those of the US. The USSR explicitly and frequently noted that peaceful coexistence did not equate to Soviet acceptance of the present world order. Nor has peace been used to mean, or necessarily imply, the lack of conflict.

US determination to sponsor a world free of warfare was thus rudely confronted by the Soviet insistence on actively furthering the cause of world socialism on a grand scale. Having repeatedly emphasized that peaceful coexistence was the only forum available in a nuclear age by which to continue the war against capitalism, one can understand Moscow's surprise at the outcry evoked in Washington by Angola and Ethiopia. A consideration of the historical Russian expansionist proclivity, with its conviction that the military instrument remains the final arbitrator, would have prepared American political observers for destabilizing activity of that sort, if perhaps not for that degree. Likewise the awesome military buildup achieved during detente and the move into Afghanistan for the protection of a Soviet border area were perfectly in keeping with published Soviet security and military doctrine.

Washington's efforts to encourage change within the Soviet system proceeded from the premise that Soviet external behavior would not become more restrained and internationally acceptable until a greater degree of internal liberalization had been effected. For those attuned to the implications for the world order of a repressive power devoted to global aspirations, a domestic reform appeared an appropriate method to remove the most threatening aspect of Soviet expansion. The moral imperative to improve human living conditions further reinforced US policy inclinations in that

direction. Soviet leaders, however and not unexpectedly, construed the human rights campaign as blatant interference in their internal affairs and objected strenuously to that linkage program.

By not taking into account the political ramifications for the Communist ruling elite of an altered domestic policy on the Western model, Washington unwittingly engineered the failure of detente. With the survival of the Party, or at least its privileged position, at stake, "no 'carrot and stick' the West could use would result in substantive changes in the system itself. The Soviet definition of security is based on the assumption of the legitimacy of the Soviet regime. Recognition of this legitimacy is perceived as the minimal requirement for those who seek constructive relations with Moscow." [Ref. 31: p. 7] Possibilities for comparisons of Weltanschauungen as a function of political culture are numerous and examples of mismanagement are not lacking. The few mentioned, however, will adequately indicate the enormity of the communication problem in the East-West "dialogue", a condition which the USSR often turned to its own advantage.

If "the victorious march of the Soviet Army into Eastern Europe, Manchuria, and Korea, gave the Soviet leaders an opportunity to resume the export of communism," [Ref. 55: p. 3] the attainment of nuclear parity presented them another golden one. The altered image of a peaceful but



powerful nation increasingly able to project its influence at will on a global basis was not lost on the world community. To be sure, the advancing Soviet presence precipitated by detente cannot be construed as an unbroken string of successes. Diplomatic reversals were not uncommon, although seldom as dramatic as was the case with Egypt, and a certain bad reputation for relatively poor quality and undependable delivery of goods was earned. Equally important for many Third World countries were the heavy-handed, rude treatment received and questionable reliability of Soviet support (e.g. Somalia). On the whole, however, the extent of Soviet activity was impressive and Moscow has demonstrated an ability to learn from past mistakes. What Moscow has not shown is the intention to voluntarily curtail its activities. Unless confronted with strong American resistance, Soviet leaders will exploit the opportunity given them to pursue their objectives. Rather than a strong stand, however, the US was executing a global retreat, itself of immeasurable assistance to the Soviets.

The Vietnam and Watergate experiences can scarcely be underestimated for their impact on American domestic and, consequently, foreign politics. The unwillingness to maintain the previous degree of global visibility was directly translated into a refusal to sustain the military expenditures necessary for a credible defense posture.

Since democracies in general possess an innate aversion to military costs and are predisposed to balk at long-term defense commitments, the Vietnam trauma produced a pervasive and especially strong anti-military sentiment. Although NATO detente policy had been formulated and accepted on the premise of negotiations based on military defense capability, Western governments eagerly cut defense budgets and thereby exacerbated the growing disparity in East-West force balances. This trend, spawned by the rejection of a legitimate role for the military, admirably played into Soviet hands, where Clausewitz reigns supreme. What subsequently proved to be a misplaced confidence in the economic instrument as a means to modify Soviet behavior seemed to justify the relaxation of military preparedness as well as political tensions vis-à-vis the enemy. As von Alten noted, "it is a semantic deception to equate detente with decreasing vigilance or even a lesser importance of military security, and this deception is equally dangerous for supporters and opponents of detente." [Ref. 56: p. 644]

In spite of nuclear parity and a new American attitude of partnership founded on the acceptance of the foe as a political equal, the US-Soviet relationship after 1969 has actually been determined by growing asymmetries. Increased superpower divergence in the power ratio of capability and will manifested itself most importantly, if often subtly, in Europe. On that crucial front the USSR

scored substantial successes while, ironically, "the European partners discovered a new sense of solidarity, not against the adversary to the East, but in face of the partner to the West. To put it mildly, the new impact of detente upon the alliance was anything but salubrious." [Ref. 38: p. 66] At the center of East-West negotiations as well as intra-Alliance controversy was, of course, the FRG.

## 2. Implications for the German Question

A surface consideration of US-Soviet detente within the limited context of the German question must lead to the conclusion that both countries successfully achieved their stated goals. The US obtained an agreement on Berlin that supposedly guaranteed improved communications and regulated interaction between West Berlin and the FRG and visiting privileges between the two Berlins. In this fashion a potentially politically volatile and the only truly "active" issue from Potsdam days was finally defused. In return the USSR received Western recognition of the territorial status quo, with all the ramifications therein implied for Eastern Europe. Initially formalized in the bilateral treaties associated with West German Ostpolitik, multilateral approval followed with the Helsinki Agreement. An analysis of the ramifications implied by these negotiations for Western Europe, and especially for the FRG, reveals, however, that the US certainly did not "harness the beast of detente".

If anything, detente opened a veritable Pandora's box, the lid of which Washington has been unable to close.

"Oversimplified, detente was supposed to liberalize the internal and domesticate the foreign policies of the Soviet Union and its clients. Moscow, for its part, hoped to therewith set in motion an erosion of the Western system." [Ref. 57: p. 294] Judged in those terms, the US clearly failed to achieve its objectives while the USSR made perceptible progress toward its aim. Although detente was rooted in the status quo, the superpowers held diametrically opposite notions of the significance attached to ratification of the above treaties. "If the main effect of negotiation is to recognize the status quo, the main effect of this recognition may well be to unleash forces that will undermine it more irresistibly than either military pressure or diplomatic bargaining." [Ref. 58: p. 14] The essential differences in US and Soviet policies regarding Germany can most readily be grasped by briefly summarizing the decisive asymmetrical security interests, perceptions and long-term European goals motivating the two antagonists.

Geography represents a basic and inescapable element of dissimilarity in superpower concern about Germany. The US has consistently declared Western Europe an area of vital security interest. Historic-cultural and economic arguments supporting that valuation added force to the more

traditional balance-of-power rationale. Domination of all Europe would simply make Soviet power too great. The political decision having therefore been taken to contain Soviet expansion, military considerations (e.g. intelligence collection, ASW, air defense, stationing of troops) likewise required protection of Western Europe. The key continental country, politically, economically, militarily and geostrategically, for that defense is the FRG. Yet the physical distance between North America and Europe unavoidably acts to militate against the latter being an absolutely indispensable military necessity for the former. Washington's degree of commitment simply cannot be as great as that of Moscow, itself a European capital. "Although the United States has the dual status of a global power and a self-appointed European power, there is no inherent harmony between the two. This contradiction is exploited by the Soviet Union, whose geography casts it in the role of a global and European power." [Ref. 59: p. 312]

Believing the West to be hostile by nature to its very existence, Soviet leaders tend to regard the continental division in terms of survival. Twentieth-century experiences with Germany have not predisposed Moscow to view with equanimity the dramatic recovery of the FRG to a prominent position in the West. Although the USSR firmly controls the bordering Eastern European countries, the FRG, both as site of massed NATO forces and home of allegedly



militant "revanchists", has been perceived by the USSR as a fundamental security threat. Soviet foreign policy in the European theater has revolved around West German military issues. In attempting to provide security on its Western front, the Soviets engaged in a two-pronged tactical maneuver: an unprecedented military force buildup at the regional level and SALT negotiations with the US at the global level. Asymmetrical purposes for arms-control measures, however, have likewise adversely affected the American role in Germany.

Primarily occupied with the overall balance of intercontinental nuclear armaments, the US concentrated on limitations of total numbers with little regard to the deployment distribution of systems of other ranges. As mentioned earlier, NATO acceptance of detente, at US urging, and West German initiation of Ostpolitik were predicated upon the twin pillars of negotiations and defense. The Western decision to reduce defense spending as a result of relaxed tension with the USSR contributed substantially to the growing theater force imbalance. A failure to provide strong, consistent leadership as well as a satisfactory SALT agreement did much to weaken the official US rationale for detente in Europe, which had been "based on an assumption of continuing stability in that area." [Ref. 60: p. 193] The net impact of the military disparity resulting from "instabilities in the

strategic relationship between Moscow and Washington will tend to weigh rather heavily on the core area of the political confrontation between East and West, Central Europe." [Ref. 61: p. 100] Having gained the military advantage from a combination of American mismanagement of detente and a planned force buildup, which began only after the US and Western Europe were committed to strategic stability, [Ref. 62: p. 110] the USSR also extracted political benefits from SALT.

Unlike the US, which has persistently been reluctant to admit the political function of military power and has recently shown itself ever more unwilling to commit military force as a means to effect political goals, the USSR is acutely aware of the potential gains to accrue from a correlation of military power and political ambitions. "For the Soviet Union, SALT had always been an endeavor to change political structure in the Western alliance rather than reduce strategic forces to lower levels." [Ref. 63: p. 5] The all-important goal of Soviet policy in Western Europe has remained the replacement of the US presence with that of its own. Implications of the essential link between detente and defense, publicized by the West but implemented by the East, were clearly drawn by Nerlich: "The long-term political strategy of the Soviet Union, where the buildup of military power and a willingness to enter into negotiations are designed mutually to reinforce

each other in pursuing the goal of gradual political changes in Europe, aims to dissolve the structures of American-West European cooperation and thus the commitment to share all risks." [Ref. 64: pp. 20-21] Thus the attainment of regional, and in some aspects global, military superiority fostered an increasing Western European accommodationist attitude toward Moscow. American nuclear credibility became questionable in terms of both capability as well as intent. Soviet appeals to West German, and to a lesser extent Western European, desires to overcome the division of the continent were likewise calculated to weaken Alliance ties.

Of the several asymmetries distinguishing US and Soviet interests in Europe, that of the future vision of the continent is most striking. A crucial motivational distinction must be drawn between the conflicting views of what the term "status quo" actually denotes. A superpower political equilibrium was established with the partitioning of Europe in 1945 that has since remained undisturbed. Although not necessarily reflective of power equality, that division has symbolized

a standoff in competitive power between two sides that is mutually acceptable. . . . The statesmen on both sides not only accept the situation but prefer it to any foreseeable alternative. The status quo becomes a standard of the acceptable balance of power, and so long as neither side moves to alter it or perceives that it is being altered the equilibrium will continue. The difference between stalemate and equilibrium is that in a stalemate one or both sides would change conditions if they could and are seeking means to do so. (Emphasis added) [Ref. 65: pp. 18-19]

An acceptance of the equilibrium as a status quo due to lack of other viable options accurately describes only the immediate post-war period. Even at that time, however, Moscow was not advocating balance-of-power politics or surrendering to pan-European goals. Van Oudenaren has perceptively pointed out that

in the Soviet view the essence of the status quo is its capacity for constant change. . . . Just as the Brandt government accepted the status quo in order to change it, so the Soviets, having attained their minimum territorial requirements vis-à-vis Western Europe, and having stabilized Eastern Europe by military intervention, were ready to accept and work within the Western status quo, the better to influence and ultimately undermine it.  
[Ref. 66: p. 162]

Washington's perception of the status quo stands in sharp contrast to Moscow's destabilizing intentions.

Satisfied with the present political structure, the US seemingly wishes nothing more than a maintenance of a static defense within the current NATO framework. The implicit assumption of US leadership within the Alliance remains active, but no longer accurately reflects the original situation. For although both superpowers accepted the status quo

the same interest in maintaining the structure has allowed of great differences in the process, and the result of the different processes at work in East and West is that Western Europe has become more disorganized and less important, and that Eastern Europe has become more highly organized, has come under firmer Soviet control, and that Soviet interests there have become more and more difficult to distinguish from Soviet interests at home. But that is not all.



Western Europe was central to American policy-making not only in the period of the Cold War, but also while the United States was working out the nature of detente. The policies of linkage, as they were developed and articulated by the United States, began, however, to reduce this role. . . . This wide interdependence also meant that Western Europe was down-graded as a central criterion of American policy. [Ref. 67: p. 39]

European detente having primarily progressed on a divisible basis, that is, according to Soviet plans, the Alliance leadership role of the US has eroded noticeably.

American preoccupation with other global concerns built a case for legitimate Western European claims of having also suffered "benign neglect". Since the West Europeans were obliged to conduct detente-related initiatives with Moscow on a bilateral basis, the USSR was able to encourage the pursuit of more nationalistic and individualistic policies by the European allies than was previously the case. Apparently able to conceive of and offer only two possibilities of Soviet policy, those of confrontation or detente, US efforts to revert to the former were increasingly resisted by European partners. Soviet regional military preponderance and the tangible financial interests resulting from East-West trade agreements worked in tandem to create intra-Alliance friction on the issue of "continuing" detente. The US bid to recapture the diplomatic initiative failed due to an altered Western European, and especially West German, domestic political scene that would not tolerate a return to the Cold War.



The Kremlin also scored a success with CSCE. The signing of the Helsinki Agreement was used by the USSR to set in process a propaganda campaign that may prove ominously significant for NATO cohesion. Once again, the contrast in US-Soviet perspectives on the meaning of CSCE was symptomatic of their incompatible regard for the status quo. "While Brezhnev in his comments on the conference stressed that he saw it as a major political fact marking the 'close of an era', President Ford said that he regarded CSCE not as a surrogate peace conference, but as part of a process, 'a challenge, not a conclusion.'" [Ref. 68: pp. 189-190] By thus serving notice of a more confrontational attitude and a dissatisfaction with detente, the US displayed an unawareness of, or insensitivity to, the mood and needs of the FRG. In the Soviet estimation, however, an evolutionary process of change began with CSCE that inaugurated a new era of "irreversible detente".

Although the participation of the US in the Helsinki Conference represented a major Soviet tactical concession in that it tacitly acknowledged legitimate American interests in Europe, it did not connote a strategic compromise by accepting those interests as permanent. Given past experiences, present world conditions and the conviction of future victory, Moscow has simply opted for a more subtle and sophisticated propaganda campaign against the FRG in particular and the West in general by which to

achieve its immutable final aims. This strategm may well prove highly effective due to Soviet ability and willingness to prosecute a long-term policy of slowly accruing gains.

For this reason

The Soviet Union no longer asks (or pretends to ask) for the dissolution of the blocs and the withdrawal of the United States. She wants, within the existing structures, to encourage a shift in the psychological balance, in the comparative unity and dynamism of the two superpowers, the two alliances, the two Europes, the two Germanies, the two Berlins. Her preferred solution is an American presence real enough to exercise some control over Germany and to prevent military efforts in Western Europe and false hopes in Eastern Europe, yet declining and uncertain enough to create doubts in West European countries - again, especially in Germany - and to prompt them to look for reassurance in accommodation to her.

[Ref. 58: p. 31]

The past decade has witnessed remarkable progress toward realization of this situation.

If Helsinki "authorized" an American influence in the FRG, it certainly implied permission of the same for the USSR, which quite naturally had long claimed that right on the basis of geographic considerations. The CSCE Final Act was heralded by Soviet authorities as the framework within which all future European affairs would be conducted. In presenting that agreement as the political "settlement" of unresolved World War II issues, the USSR could then demand Western European cooperation and consultation on all matters within the context of that structural arrangement, thereby forcing a

favorable change in Europe "from above" as it were.

. . . Since Helsinki the Soviets have in fact interpreted the final act as a document giving the USSR a formal, quasi-juridical right to be consulted in the affairs of Western Europe and to exercise an influence over the process of economic and political integration in the West.

. . . The thrust of the Soviet line is that under CSCE auspices Western Europe is committed to seeking all-European solutions to problems, which in effect means that East-West talks must take precedence over unilateral actions.

[Ref. 66: p. 168]

The argument that a crucial change has already occurred and can be neither reversed nor circumvented is a powerful psychological device for inducing a sense of helpless inevitability. The accompanying feeling of having been caught up in uncontrollable and unrelenting forces can yield to a paralysis of the will and an automatic acceptance of Soviet political doctrine. For obvious reasons, the FRG is the Western country most susceptible to this ploy of "mental" fait accompli. Adroit Soviet exploitation of West German fears of war has carved deep niches in the previously unchallenged acceptance of American leadership in NATO. More importantly, though, Soviet recasting of national foreign policy goals in terms of "peace" rather than "freedom" has allowed detente rhetoric to manipulate basic existential impulses that could finally prove fatal to the Alliance.

## B. SOVIET-WEST GERMAN DIMENSION

### 1. General Comments

Because the USSR is both a regional and a global power, the two levels of Soviet detente participation intersected in Germany. With Washington regarding Berlin as the limited agenda for shared US-Soviet interests in Germany, Moscow began to exploit the political and economic advantages offered by a divisible detente. Since the primary goals of Soviet detente were Western recognition of the territorial status quo and international acceptance of the GDR, with both serving to stabilize East-West and intra-Warsaw Pact relations, negotiations with the FRG were of central importance. Before initiating its campaign, however, the Kremlin had to counteract unfavorable repercussions from its 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia. A principal consequence of that action had been "a reversal of the trend towards fragmentation in the Western alliance prevalent during preceding years. This trend had been due not only to the specific policies conducted by President de Gaulle but also to a more general feeling of transatlantic alienation caused in part by the war in Vietnam." [Ref. 69: p. 4] By the end of 1969, the interrupted detente impulse had been restored and negotiations had begun.

The prospects of effectively sowing discord within the Western alliance appeared sufficiently alluring for a compromise of de jure for de facto recognition by Bonn of the

GDR. That retreat from a past position and acceptance of the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin were the meager concessions to rapprochement that enabled the Kremlin to obtain West German acknowledgement of the European status quo. The FRG, however, exchanged "possession" goals (to achieve the freedom of the German people in the East and eventual German reunification in a democratic system) for the "milieu" goal of detente (to promote a reorganization of Europe). [Ref. 70: p. 78] Although in so doing it acceded to Alliance desires and provided a basis for creation of a viable modus vivendi with the East, "Willy Brandt's 'new' Ostpolitik and Deutschlandpolitik were policies of resignation, realizing that West Germany had to accept what existed in order to strengthen Bonn's position vis-à-vis the East." [Ref. 71: p. 21] Just as US-Soviet policies on Germany reflected a disparity of interest, the course taken by Ostpolitik and the ensuing results were largely determined by asymmetrical factors of crucial importance.

In the first instance, the USSR very much wanted the fruits of detente whereas the FRG actually needed them. Having persuaded the West German public of the necessity of a revised Eastern policy and having subsequently produced tangible benefits therefrom, the SPD was, and is, committed to maintaining the policy of detente as a matter of political survival. "Continuity" has been a key slogan of



the current CDU/CSU-FDP government, therein revealing an undeniable domestic demand for Ostpolitik.

Every Federal Government must take into account the special responsibility deriving from the division of our country and its geographical location on the border towards the east. Pursuing an active policy for peace towards the countries of Central and Eastern Europe continues to be the task of German foreign policy. The interests of the people have priority for us. On the basis of the valid treaties and the final act of Helsinki, the Federal Government will continue to work towards genuine detente, dialogue and cooperation. We want to do everything in our power to make the division of Germany and Europe more bearable for the people affected and to maintain good relations with our neighbours in Central and Eastern Europe. The Federal Government will devote particular attention to relations with the Soviet Union and work for their continual development. [Ref. 72: pp. 5-6]

The lack of a viable alternative to Ostpolitik for the Federal Republic clearly demonstrates the unequal nature of the Soviet-West German dialogue.

Secondly, the absence of strong US support forced the FRG to conduct its policies strictly from its own power base. In spite of its economic strength and political significance within the Western alliance, the FRG was simply not a strong enough state to compete on an equal basis with the Soviet superpower. Even if Moscow had not disposed of the means to resolve the German question according to Bonn's wishes, political leverage could only have been generated from the Soviet side. Operating under the twin constraints of domestic political imperatives and an inferior power position, Bonn became a special target of Soviet attempts to weaken NATO cohesion.

In its drive to exacerbate the "internal contradictions" operant in the West, the USSR scored its greatest success with the FRG.

Among all European countries, West Germany is certainly the one which is-given its partition and its location on the borders of the Soviet empire-the most committed to detente. It is also the one which has benefited most from what have been called the "dividends" of detente. Ostpolitik gave Germany the political dimension that the Federal Republic was lacking up until the 1970s: it permitted Germany's international recognition, and above all it turned the Federal Republic into the center of gravity of East-West relations in Europe. In the process, the United States (and, to a lesser degree, France) in many respects lost the initiative in dealings with the East. The Soviets in turn won a precious "advocate" within NATO as well as the means to push forward their policy of decoupling "European detente" from US-Soviet relations. [Ref. 73: p. 821]

This summation of the political significance of detente for the main European actors gives a clear indication of some of the important strategic points won by the Soviets. A less obvious, but potentially more dangerous, Soviet gain has been registered at the psychological level.

The main objective of the Soviet peace program was not to arrange a brief breathing spell for purposes of recovery, as in times past, but rather to alter fundamentally the threat perception held in the West. The presentation of an appearance of a genuine Soviet desire to peacefully coexist (as defined in Western terms) within the status quo did much to revise the image of an aggressive "Russian bear". In fact, the absence of a Soviet invasion of Western Europe has encouraged revisionist historians in the West to infer the non-existence of such an intent at any time and to impute

purely defensive motives to the Kremlin's leaders. To no longer consider the USSR a threat would undercut the very rationale for NATO's existence. At the same time, the USSR had to guard against a parallel danger affecting Warsaw Pact cohesion.

Moscow had been constrained to downplay the "revanchist" theme in order to transform the FRG into a legitimate detente trade partner. This modified version of the German threat presented a dilemma, however, for rationalizing the continued Soviet military presence in Eastern Europe. An unending stream of Soviet propaganda castigating the FRG for its alleged aggressive designs on the lost Eastern territories had served since 1945 to justify the Soviet occupation of those countries. Removal of that sense of urgent threat created a potential control problem in that area. "The 'need for enemies' is a fundamental element in the philosophy of the Soviet system, not only as a remnant of the revolutionary era but also because it serves a vital function in the cohesion and legitimization of totalitarian systems."

[Ref. 74: p. 21] The "reformed revanchist" motif has proven of ephemeral value, however, to the FRG.

The West German gains associated with reduced Soviet rhetoric concerning "revanchism" could momentarily be withdrawn by the Kremlin and used as a cudgel to express disapproval of any given West German action. Attention to Soviet statements concerning the FRG could, in fact, provide

an accurate barometric reading of Moscow's pleasure (or lack thereof) with Bonn. "It would be an illusion, therefore, to hope to arrive at a genuine climate of detente with the Soviet Union: all that can be achieved is the conditional cessation of particular verbal attacks and epithets."

[Ref. 74: p. 21] Given the domestic demand for Ostpolitik and the general aversion to propaganda characteristic of democracies, Bonn often did not adequately defend its position against Soviet manipulation of threat perceptions. Thus in the area of "image control" the USSR also enjoyed an asymmetrical advantage. A Soviet disadvantage derived from detente, similar in nature to that posed by threat perception management but of greater portent, concerned support of "Basket Three" of the Helsinki Accords.

Helsinki placed Moscow in the uncomfortable position of being liable to charges of failing to adhere to the human rights requirements expected of all signatories. On the one hand, European acceptance of the territorial status quo provided an aura of legitimacy for Soviet occupation of Eastern Europe, thereby aiding in the reinforcement and maintenance of control. Conversely, increased contact with the West via trade and exchanges created "penetration effects" that made Soviet dominance seem less legitimate. Thus, "leaving aside the fundamental incongruence between 'peaceful coexistence' and 'detente', . . . the Soviet Union is caught between the demands of the 'class struggle' --its very raison



d'être as a revolutionary power--and those of detente and related criteria of political performance." [Ref. 23: p. 235] The "liberalizing" tendency inherent within increased exposure to the West, a primary purpose of West German Ostpolitik, introduced an unwelcome degree of external influence hinting at possible control difficulties within the Warsaw Pact.

To combat the potentially destabilizing results of Ostpolitik, Soviet "detente" (more accurately described as "peaceful coexistence") has been an attempt to divide it into acceptable (trade, credits, loans, technology transfer) and unacceptable (open borders, increased contact and communication) components. The GDR also has proven especially sensitive to distinctions between the two categories. From the very beginning East Berlin has provided abundant evidence that it will favorably respond to Bonn's initiatives only to the extent that Moscow enforces compliance with them or that the financial gains sufficiently outweigh the potential political dangers. The SED policy of "demarcation" (Abgrenzung) in reply to the SPD's "change via rapprochement" accurately represented, albeit in extreme form, the Eastern position on human contact between East and West. Eastern efforts to curtail the perceived Western interference in Eastern internal affairs have contradicted core political premises and policy motivations informing West Germany's Ostpolitik, thereby undercutting the rationale for its implementation.



## 2. Implications for the German Question

When considering the results of Ostpolitik for the FRG, one must be careful to distinguish between the means and the ends. Specifically, the purpose of the new Eastern policy was to relax political tension through a concentration on mutual interests in the hope of permitting a gradual convergence of the two halves of Europe. An overarching European solution marked by trust, open borders and cooperative interdependence would, of course, inherently include a German one also. Thus the economic cooperation thought by Brandt to be the single most important contribution to detente, in the name of improving the political climate, [Ref. 43: p. 255] must be judged in terms of altered political atmosphere and progress toward reunification rather than of trade volume or credits extended per se.

Even though "economic detente" appeared to be a mutually-held goal (although actually viewed differently as regards ultimate purpose), Bonn's hope for an encompassing convergence was not shared by the East. "The basic paradox of the Soviet policy of coexistence lies in the Soviet leaders' attempts to retain Western acceptance and support of a policy that simultaneously advocates cooperation with the Western nations to avoid war and intensification of ideological warfare to bring about capitalism's eclipse." [Ref. 75: p. 17] West German frustration and disappointment with the Eastern refusal to cooperate with the FRG's detente

policy have produced elements of resignation to the obstreperous behavior of the GDR, which has clung almost unabatedly to its zero-sum attitudes. An accompanying resignation with regard to the futility of detente itself has not, however, been registered.

The FRG's firm commitment to try alleviating the effects of the continent's division has created a situation in which Bonn has left itself open to Soviet and East German manipulation. This leverage, such as it was and is, has been primarily a product of Bonn's own creation rather than Soviet design. Some of that persistence, in all fairness to Bonn, was dictated by the long-term aspect of Ostpolitik and the domestic requirement to obtain at least perceptible progress on announced goals. ("A new relationship between East and West is required and, as part of that, a new relationship between the Soviet Union and Germany. Time is needed for that." [Ref. 41: p. 99] As Schmidt pointed out, as a justification for adhering to detente, "since 1975, since Helsinki, more than 225,000 Germans were allowed during a period of six years to leave Poland and come to the Federal Republic. In the previous six years the corresponding figure was only 68,000." [Ref. 76: p. 5]). In the terms of analysis mentioned above, however, Ostpolitik has achieved little progress in attaining its theoretical goals.

The detente period has not yielded a permanent or marked degree of relaxation in political tension nor

redressed the conventional force imbalance in Europe. Rather than evolving toward a reduction in and subsequent removal of nuclear arms, the bloc system has recently been further emphasized by weapons modernization and the asymmetrical trend of US nuclear reductions in Europe countered by Soviet increases. In general, the GDR has seldom demonstrated a willingness to comply with the provisions of the FRG-GDR Basic Treaty, a condition clearly obstructing West German reunification hopes. This overall state of affairs has led critics of Ostpolitik on both sides of the Atlantic to claim that Bonn not only "sold out" by granting de facto recognition ("It is self-evident that Bonn's new policy toward East Germany runs a high risk of perpetuating the very partition it seeks to attenuate." [Ref. 77: p. 301]) but also made the FRG a hostage to Soviet goodwill for the purpose of forcing East German adherence to treaty provisions.

The consequences for the FRG of having given the USSR its primary political goal of territorial recognition were twofold. Firstly, that formal acceptance of the status quo comprised Bonn's only bargaining chip in its negotiations with Moscow. Although Brandt could argue that nothing had been given away that was not already lost as a result of defeat in World War II, the CDU/CSU opposition would have preferred greater Soviet concessions on Berlin and guarantees of consistent East German compliance with the Basic Treaty.

As viewed by Strauss, for instance, detente has been reduced to "at best a set of Western policies of unilateral deference to Moscow at the expense of the interests of the Free World." [Ref. 78: p. 12]

Secondly, having allowed Moscow the initiative, the West German government became dependent on detente progress for its own domestic popularity. Hartley prophetically noted in 1971 that

The government of the Federal Republic has indeed got itself into the uneasy position of being dependent on Russian goodwill for its own internal political success. An Ostpolitik which began as the cautious exploration of possibilities has now become the essential ingredient of Herr Brandt's policies. The very fact that there can be discussion as to whether Moscow will choose to aid him by concessions on the Berlin question or will reserve its favors for a successor Christian Democrat regime suggests that his government may have lost some of its freedom of action. The euphoria which reigned in West Germany following the conclusion of the Moscow treaty, the approval voiced by politicians and public opinion polls, make any retreat all the more difficult. Here again the advantageous position gained by Russian diplomacy is not the fault of the German negotiators. It was very much inscribed in the facts of an unequal dialogue. [Ref. 79: p. 275]

What was true at that time has remained valid to the present.

"Having hitched its electoral fortunes to Ostpolitik and reconciliation, the SPD is condemned to demonstrate forever the viability of detente, for the sake of its survival in power." [Ref. 80: p. 212] The installation of a CDU/CSU-FDP government in 1982, likewise committed to an uninterrupted continuance of detente, indicated the domestic constraints operant in West German foreign policy. In the estimation of Windsor, Ostpolitik has accordingly failed in its objectives



of facilitating the establishment of a new European peace order in which prospects for eventual reunification could be promoted and preserved:

Willy Brandt's express hope had been that a more flexible pattern of relations could emerge in Europe once West Germany had explicitly accepted the status quo. . . . However, these hopes were soon dashed. The East German response was the policy of Abgrenzung: that is, a division of functions in the relationship she entertained with the Federal Republic. . . . Abgrenzung implied a particular Soviet view of the Germany problem. This problem lay no longer in the potentially disturbing effects on Eastern Europe of a powerful Federal Republic dedicated to changing the status quo; it lay now in the potential threats to stability in the East which could arise from a close relationship between the two Germanies. These were not to be permitted to develop to any such point. Detente, in Soviet eyes, should remain a limited and non-dynamic condition of international relations, particularly as it affected Eastern Europe. [Ref. 81: pp. 5-6]

Evidence of the above evaluation was recently provided when Moscow persuaded SED chief Honecker to postpone indefinitely the visit to the FRG that had been scheduled for September 1984. Apparently both Germanys were beginning to take Ostpolitik objectives a bit too seriously for Moscow's comfort. From the Soviet viewpoint, German reunification was, and is, a dead issue. From the West German perspective, however, Ostpolitik theory and goals remained operant. Yet considering actual political results, and allowing for the long-term factor within the Brandt/Bahr concept, an analysis of the post-1969 period must nevertheless conclude that basic assumptions critical for success of that theory did not correspond to the reality of the situation.



A crucial underpinning of the entire Brandt/Bahr concept was the assumption that a similar mental process was at work in Kremlin leaders. It seemed inconceivable in the West that a certain "obvious" rationale had not been accepted by all "reasonable" men and the "logical" conclusions drawn therefrom. Specifically, Western governments were convinced that the doctrine of deterrence was understood and accepted by the Soviets in the same terms as in the West. Proceeding on the basis of these shared "facts", it was a simple matter to impute altered foreign policy goals to the USSR and appeal to Moscow as if it too quite naturally had the same common interests invested in detente.

Brandt believed that the USSR, prior to his Ostpolitik, had "wanted a peace on the basis of the status quo, i.e. on confrontation and the division of Europe, a peace at the expense of Germany." [Ref. 45: p. 156] In this he identified a reactionary power, one concerned primarily with obtaining written concurrence with the results of World War II and thereby strengthening its position as much as possible. [Ref. 43: p. 155] This estimation changed in April 1970 when he claimed that the USSR had altered its status quo policy vis-à-vis the FRG in order to establish better relations with Western Europe and the US. [Ref. 43: p. 156]

On the basis of that Soviet willingness to improve relations and the mutually-desired wish to avoid nuclear war, the SPD-led government proceeded to ascribe its own goals

and motivations to Moscow. Bahr therefore advocated accepting the opponent as a partner since security in a nuclear age was only possible with him rather than against him. [Ref. 82: p. 425] The emphasis on exploiting areas of mutual interest to create trust and cooperation, the belief in the power of rising economic standards to achieve progressively greater political stability and liberalization, and the desire to include the East in the world community for the purpose of control by integration all agreed with the Nixon/Kissinger concepts of 1969-1974. These ideas also closely described the actual West German post-1945 experience in which a possible threat had been contained via "enmeshing" it within the Western system. The greatest confidence-building measure the FRG could contribute to the detente concept was acceptance of the territorial status quo on "the assumption that the recognition of existing international boundaries would neutralize antagonisms and reduce tensions." [Ref. 83: p. 86] The fundamental flaw in this theory was the premise that Soviet animosity had dissolved into an amicable desire to help realize the SPD vision of the future.

In spite of the USSR's desire to avoid nuclear war and improve relations in order to obtain financial and technical assistance, one cannot logically infer an altered Soviet political intent vis-à-vis the West. The USSR has very explicitly outlined what "peaceful coexistence" means. "Ideological" detente has consistently been disavowed and

the defeat of capitalism and the establishment of Soviet-controlled "socialism" has remained Moscow's principal foreign policy objective. Revolutionary goals, if not always overtly revolutionary means, still characterize Soviet policy. Far from a satiated status quo power, the USSR entered into negotiations with the FRG with a dynamic concept in mind that was not intended to create the unified Europe of Brandt and Bahr. Finland, rather than any type of partnership, has officially been acclaimed as the model state upon which all others should pattern their relations with Moscow. A one-sided Soviet security concept, bearing no resemblance to Bahr's "fruitful coexistence" and military disengagement, has characterized that relationship. A Soviet-style "socialist" solution to the European division has long been the espoused goal of the Soviets. By ignoring Soviet statements and supplying the acknowledgement of the territorial status quo demanded by the Soviets, Bonn placed itself in a position of being subject to Soviet control of the political initiative.

A basic internal contradiction also marred the theory. The political convergence envisioned required "a greater degree of national independence and certain politico-ideological emancipation from the USSR. Yet at the same time the originators of the concept wanted to have the desired process of change run its course with the complete agreement of the hegemonic Soviet power." [Ref. 46: p. 114] Recognizing that

the roads to all East European capitals ran through Moscow, Soviet willingness to work toward a future Europe based on the Western model was crucial for success of the SPD plan. Since destruction, not further expansion, of the Western system was, and is, the goal of Soviet Westpolitik, the enormity of the error in assuming like intent is readily apparent.

One facet of Abgrenzung, by way of example, diametrically opposed cherished Western detente theory. The concept of encouraging internal change through economic improvement was defied by the East Berlin government. Although trade with the West had strengthened the SED regime, it had not reduced the sense of threat perceived by an illegitimate government in competition with a more appealing political alternative. Consequently, a stricter control over both foreign and domestic affairs has been instituted rather than a greater degree of liberalization fostered. "Indeed, the evolution of the DDR [GDR] was plainly developing in a way which ran counter to the general assumption that economic decentralization leads to political pluralization." [Ref. 84: p. 120]

Unlike the de Gaulle formulation for overcoming the power and politico-structural opposition of the two blocs via an altered East-West relationship, that of the SPD assumed a basis of entente for the detente justifying cooperation. The French formula, on the other hand, had

called for three consecutive phases of detente, then entente and, finally, cooperation. In its haste to work patiently toward a long-term goal, the Brandt/Bahr program took for granted the second element, using it to initiate the first as an excuse to immediately plunge into the third. Once again, the weakness of the theory was demonstrated by Soviet word and deed contradicting its imputed agreement with the West.

A final problem concerned the role assigned ideology in the new Europe. Brandt was of the option that "ideological opposition does not at all need to stand in the way of genuine dialogue." [Ref. 41: p. 146] Wehner was even more explicit when he discussed the projected "confederation": "We do not demand that Communists must stop being Communists. . . . Everything that the people in their part of Germany do not expressly want to have changed . . . they must be able to retain." [Ref. 44: p. 155] Although the SPD was vague about the actual form to be assumed by its future Europe, it is nevertheless difficult to imagine the two ideologies remaining in place yet somehow ineffectual. Ideology about legitimate political order is the crux of the East-West conflict and cannot be anesthetized by cultural exchanges and trade ventures.

The USSR has neither declared an ideological truce nor regarded Ostpolitik as anything other than an attack on its own established political order in Eastern Europe. In



short, "the real problem in relations between the West and the Soviet Union is that their aims of realizing European and world peace are largely irreconcilable, and even antagonistic." [Ref. 85: p. 1] It was a collective Western blunder to unilaterally decide for Moscow that its aims were also Moscow's. It was a specific West German blunder to decide that greater Alliance support for reunification could be garnered by subsuming the national goal within the greater European issue.

## C. US-WEST GERMAN DIMENSION

### 1. General Comments

In deference to the "voices in Washington and London" encouraging greater responsibility for conduct of its own foreign affairs, the FRG embarked on detente in order to avoid isolation within the West. ("The FRG is in a certain respect catching up in the normalization of its relations with the countries of Eastern Europe, something its allies have already completed." [Ref. 41: p. 292]). Initial US-West German collaboration on detente policy had centered on negotiating a Berlin agreement and convening an all-European Security Conference with US and Canadian participation. Never very enthusiastic about the latter, the successful signing of the Quadripartite Agreement in 1971 allowed Washington to shift its attention away from Europe and concern itself with more pressing global affairs (most

notably concluding its involvement in the Vietnam conflict and discussing strategic nuclear issues with Moscow).

In divorcing itself from regionally important issues, the US created the opportunity for a divisible detente to unfold. Although Washington expressly wished to prevent that very development, its failure to participate actively on behalf of the FRG compelled Bonn to conduct the unequal detente dialogue with Moscow described above.

It is important to remember that the Ostpolitik launched ten years ago depended, and continues to depend, on the leverage provided by the United States. It was Moscow's interest in a broader understanding with the United States (symbolized, among others, by SALT I) which allowed Washington to impose a link between the convening of the European Conference on Security and Cooperation (ECSC) and the Quadripartite Agreement on Berlin. [Ref. 80: p. 211]

The absence of that link between the global, regional and German detente process permitted Soviet exploitation of a loosening transatlantic tie.

Much of the intra-NATO detente controversy was more an "Atlantic" problem than a specifically West German one. Bonn, however, received more unfavorable attention from Washington because of 1) its strategic importance for NATO, 2) its previous record of compliance with US policy preferences, 3) its vulnerability to Soviet political blackmail concerning Ostpolitik, 4) its assumption of a continental leadership role that promised to be instrumental in progressively forming a more viably united European front within the Alliance and, 5) a questionable SPD flirting with

more accomodating attitudes vis-à-vis Moscow for the sake of "bridging" the superpower detente gap. Thus the value of the FRG, in military, political and economic terms, its apparent sincerity in actually pursuing reunification under a new guise, and its vested interests in maintenance of Ostpolitik marked Bonn for pressure from West as well as East. In a word, the source of Alliance discord was the division of detente into American, West European and West German versions.

The polycentric trends supposedly evolving in the East were unambiguously operant in the West. The structural dissimilarities between NATO and the Warsaw Pact placed Washington at a pronounced disadvantage vis-à-vis Moscow as regards directing a common foreign policy. While coercion was, and is, Moscow's instrument of control, Washington must primarily rely upon persuasion and common interests. The change of threat perception that ushered in the detente era further eroded US predominance by calling into question the strongest common interest of all: fear of the USSR. These factors encouraged the natural tendency to pursue more individual and nationalistic foreign policies, which were given yet an added impetus by a certain degree of US default on its leadership role. These systemic problems were exacerbated by the lack of a coherent detente scheme in the West that could have provided common guidelines to direct the general flow of individual policy initiatives.

In many respects detente functioned more as a mood and justification than a concrete program of action.

The Harmel Report on the Future Tasks of the Alliance had declared that the relaxation of tensions with the East was compatible with and even complementary to defence and deterrence. But this combination, while entirely rational as a policy, was ambiguous as to precisely how the Soviet Union and the other Communist-governed countries of Eastern Europe were to be approached for limited cooperation and a security partnership. [Ref. 86: p. 37]

Washington's early withdrawal from an active role in European detente after the signing of the Quadripartite Agreement ensured the policy division against which Kissinger had warned in 1969. At that time the US answer for constraining a possibly precipitous West German Ostpolitik had been application of the linkage principle: no Eastern treaties, with their recognition of the territorial status quo, unless Moscow first cooperated on Berlin. Between then and 1979, however, too much had happened and the divergence in threat perceptions had become too pronounced for the US to be able to command a return to a more traditional Soviet policy.

A logical outcome of aligning itself with declared NATO detente policy was the creation of a greater degree of maneuverability for the FRG within the Western Alliance. In shedding the burden of complete dependence on NATO, Bonn declared itself no longer ready to unconditionally accept Western dominance of its political and economic future. [Ref. 3: p. 722] The ensuing and ever-growing



intra-NATO disagreements on alliance policy vis-à-vis the East can be traced to that moment of incipient assumption by Bonn of greater responsibility for its own fate. Joffe has correctly asserted that "by quarantining its 'special conflict' with the East, the Federal Republic acquired a new set of interests as well as vulnerabilities which together, almost add up to a 'special detente' with the countries of the Warsaw Pact." [Ref. 87: p. 90] Greater foreign policy independence incurred the risk, and even the likelihood, however, of eventual disputes with alliance partners.

Disillusioned with Soviet detente for its own reasons and determined to "punish" Moscow for the invasion of Afghanistan and the imposition of martial law in Poland, Washington called for Western sanctions against the USSR in December 1979 and December 1981. The West German decisions to defy the US and continue with "business as usual" shocked Washington and shattered West Germany's image as the "model ally". Differences on economic issues, especially when related directly to detente policy, have accounted for steadily worsening Bonn-Washington relations. West Germany's heavy political and emotional investment in detente has added to the questioning of US leadership with regard to NATO economic policy. As noted by Yost, "West European governments spurn United States suggestions to diminish certain links with the East because they regard detente and



improved East-West trade as long-term security measures complementary to the United States security guarantee embodied in NATO." [Ref. 88: p. 435] Thus the search for "supplemental security" merged with the drive to protect detente progress (or at least prevent detente impediment).

Foreign policy action based on the theoretical assumption of sufficient political maturity to pursue national goals via Ostpolitik was facilitated, and even encouraged, by the lack of strong US leadership in Europe during the decade of the 1970s. From Bonn's perspective, Washington had no real grounds to fault West German policy since, as Brandt pointedly remarked, "the FRG has begun to define its own interests, to analyze its possibilities and its role and to transform the results into practical policies. Precisely this has repeatedly been pressed upon us in past years by the US. There is no reason to complain about this when it acutally now occurs." [Ref. 43: p. 183] Although those words of policy justification were spoken in 1967, the message conveyed was even more pertinent in 1980: Do not condemn us for becoming what you yourself urged upon us. And, he might have added, all for the sake of a Soviet policy not originally of our own choosing. It was the obvious discrepancy in role definition that precipitated much of the US-West German discord.

Bonn, in fact, was the object of more than its fair share of US anger in that "The split that opened within the

Western Alliance was between Europe and America, not West Germany and the rest. Yet in the resulting row within NATO it was West Germany's motives that were most closely questioned." [Ref. 89: p. 131] If, as earlier contended, the theoretical long-term aims of Ostpolitik seem scarcely nearer realization now than in 1969, the perceptible, short-term changes associated with the issue of an evolving West German role definition have been succinctly summarized by Nerlich:

Moscow came to regard and accept the FRG as the leading Western European power. Moreover, the FRG is also now immune to French pressure on the German question. . . . At the same time, France, which saw itself robbed of its own options by Bonn's Ostpolitik, and other Western allies, which saw this policy rather as disburdening for the Westpolitik, developed a new image of the FRG with looser ties to the West.

Thus, Ostpolitik has consequences above all for the Western alliance and was in this sense short-term, that is, it was valid up to the point where a modus vivendi was established. . . . it did not provide German-American relations with any lasting priority in the policy of the FRG. Washington certainly did not adhere to such a priority. . . . while the Ostpolitik did open up a new margin of maneuver in German-American relations, it did not establish any lasting role distribution either in the German or in the American foreign policy. [Ref. 90: pp. 376-377]

One aspect of that search to find a new role manifested itself in conflicting US-West German versions of detente management. In the pursuit of commonly-held goals, such as encouraging greater regard for human rights, differences of preferred policy method stood in stark contrast to one another.

With Ostpolitik dependent in large measure on Soviet willingness to continue the process, the rapid deterioration of superpower relations threatened an early end to Soviet-West German detente. More sensitive to the internal implications for the Kremlin of expanded human rights in the USSR and Eastern Europe and appreciating that the FRG as an important economic partner could conceivably derive a political advantage from that status, Bonn sensibly opted for a low-key approach to that issue.

For Moscow to admit that ethnic groups feel foreign in the USSR--when they had been a part of the czarist empire--amounts to admitting the total failure of the Soviet nationalities policy, . . . and thus implicitly acknowledging that any ethnic group which does not identify with the USSR has the right to leave. This is what the German demands [to emigrate to the FRG] mean for the Soviet regime. . . .

In line with this, Chancellor Schmidt, anxious to give as many Germans as possible a chance to emigrate, realized that discreet negotiations bore more fruit than noisily framed demands. He therefore remained silent after President Carter's vehement statements on human rights and the right of emigration, and maintained this attitude at the Belgrade Conference. [Ref. 91: p. 202]

Soviet pressure on the FRG to assist in moderating extreme and "peace-threatening" US attitudes placed Bonn in an uncomfortable position between East and West. Efforts to protect its own interests, as well as those of the West in general, by preserving its detente link with Moscow contributed to the expanding West German role being fashioned.

The West European trend toward generally more independent nationalistic policies was viewed by the US as

particularly dangerous to Alliance unity in the West German case. The fear of increasing accommodation to Moscow for the sake of Ostpolitik appeared realized in Bonn's audacious assumption of a mediator role in the superpower dialogue and the demonstrated unwillingness to interrupt detente upon command. With the earlier assumption that geographic vulnerability and reliance on NATO for security purposes would ensure West German agreement with US proposals no longer valid, some in Washington jumped to the conclusion that the FRG was placing too high a priority on good relations with Moscow.

The potential implicit within its detente relationship vis-a-vis Bonn for instigating discord in NATO and isolating the FRG had not escaped the Kremlin. Obviously manipulative ploys to that end have not been lacking, as witnessed by "earlier American suspicions of the Federal Republic [that] had been aroused by Brezhnev's turning to Schmidt, after his disillusionment with Carter, as his principal detente partner-at a time when West Germany had been disillusioned about Ostpolitik by East Germany's refusal to intensify it and was thus looking for help from Moscow to reactivate it." [Ref. 92: p. 128] As further reinforcement to defend one's perceived national interests in the face of US pressure to do otherwise, well-timed incentives were provided by the East. "Political developments in West Germany pointing toward a loosening of that country's



solid ties to the West and an increasing distancing from America as the leading Western power, have prompted the East Germans to adopt a more flexible stance." [Ref. 93: p. 6] Although the conditions to produce another Rapallo are not present, many in the West fear an erosion of West German loyalty to NATO leading to a gradual "self-Finlandization" for the sake of Ostpolitik. The FRG's physical vulnerability and the conviction of most West Germans that almost any war -even non-nuclear -would result in the country's destruction add further credibility to that scenario.

To allay these nagging allied doubts, the current CDU/CSU government has striven to reject the image created by SPD governments of a West German intermediary between the US and USSR. ("The citizens of our country are keenly aware of the fact that we would be cast in the wrong role as mediators between or arbitrators for the superpowers. . . . We didn't-like the SPD-fail to keep our word to our alliance partners. We withstood the threats from the Soviet Union. We didn't yield to pressures from the streets." [Ref. 94: p. 1])). Assurances of continued loyalty to the West have likewise been offered. ("The Federal Republic of Germany is firmly integrated into the European Community and the Western alliance of free and democratic countries. This integration is based on a deep conviction and not on opportunist considerations. Our political priority has been and remains: freedom before unity." [Ref. 95: p. 6])).



The explicit admission that previous SPD governments harbored too grand a design for the FRG has nonetheless failed to eradicate the lingering suspicion that national interests provide a powerful motivating force in Bonn's calculations.

## 2. Implications for the German Question

A fundamental reason for conflicting US-West German preferences on Soviet policy lay in subtly but profoundly differing notions of detente goals. The obvious West German participation in the establishment of a "divisible detente" left the FRG open to accusations of disloyalty, revived nationalism or, at a minimum, dangerously drifting eastward. Concern about national interests per se was not the reason Washington singled out Bonn's policies for especially severe censure. Rather, suspicions that revisionist aims lurking behind a declaratory policy of Alliance unity served as the primary impetus for Ostpolitik haunted many Western politicians. Although German reunification had been downplayed by SPD theorists by presenting it as a natural byproduct of European unity, fears of an actual attempt to resolve a national grievance were not easily assuaged.

Western reaction to Bonn's disappointment with the cancellation of the scheduled Honecker visit demonstrated how unpopular the reunification theme is within NATO. Unease at the brief warming trend in intra-German relations manifested itself in relieved references to commitment to the

status quo. The Italian Foreign Minister, Giulio Andreotti, unleashed a storm of protest from Bonn with his blunt assessment of the FRG's political future, while simultaneously eliciting supporting statements from other West European capitals:

in Britain: "The Russians want to be assured of one thing, and we are just as determined as they to keep Germany divided"; in France: "It is fortunate for us that Richelieu, or at least his spirit, rules in the Kremlin" and "I love Germany so much, it makes me happy to have two of them"; in Italy [Andreotti]: "There are two German states and it should stay that way"; in Austria: "The Italian Foreign Minister simply formulated more clearly what everyone thinks." [Ref. 96: pp. 18, 20]

Italian equation of Ostpolitik with "pan-Germanism" actually differed little in substance from long-standing Soviet accusations of "revanchism". Inability to persuade the West and convince the East of its true acceptance of the status quo indicates a fundamental failure to communicate adequately the Brandt/Bahr concepts. (Or, conversely, it may indicate that the underlying reunification thrust has in fact been communicated and understood very well.)

The Andreotti episode, painful for Bonn, cause for official glee in East Berlin, suggested that Mr. Kohl, a talkative politician who is not always careful with his words, has an international public relations problem in selling his Deutschlandpolitik. Although his NATO allies generally applaud the wooing of East Germany and the forging of economic ties that make it increasingly dependent on Bonn, few statesmen in Western Europe would favor upsetting the postwar system built around two German states. [Ref. 97: p. 5]

Short of granting de jure recognition to the GDR, it is problematic whether any West German government could convincingly allay Eastern and Western fears of reunification

hopes. Yet even in the event of that recognition, many would most likely persist in ascribing to Bonn concealed dreams of restored German unity being achieved as the result of a finally secure SED opting for some form of political union. The Eastern treaties and Helsinki Accords did, after all, carefully preserve that very possibility of peacefully altering existing borders. Regardless of the actual or fancied existence of revisionist goals, it would be alarmist to anticipate at this point an FRG turning either bellicose or neutralist for the sake of a reunification issue that "was subtly transformed. The issue is no longer a matter of territorial but of political change; not the nature of the border but the nature of the relationship between the two German states is at stake." [Ref. 23: p. 230]

Bonn has repeatedly stressed that the main thrust of its East German policy is to ameliorate the effects of Germany's division, with reunification a subsidiary and distant goal. Heinrich Windelen, the Federal Minister for Intra-German Relations, has been quoted as stating in regard to the GDR:

We are committed, in the existing circumstances, to at least making the consequences of the division of Germany more tolerable for the people concerned by exploiting the opportunities afforded by a policy aimed at a modus vivendi. We are not bent on destabilizing the GDR. We want rather to bring about practical solutions, and to this end the GDR needs latitude for negotiation, as we ourselves do. Consequently, we face up to reality. [Ref. 98: p. 4]

That last sentence may well have been intended to convey the old assurances that the FRG is neither distancing itself from NATO nor attempting to isolate the USSR within the Warsaw Pact. ("East Berlin's credits, trade and political contacts with Bonn are destabilizing the GDR. . . . East Berlin's attempt to gain autonomy, according to Koptelzev [Soviet emissary to the Soviet embassy in East Berlin], is being financially supported by the Federal government and contributes to isolation of the USSR within its own camp." [Ref. 99: p. 20]) Given both Western and Eastern refusal to countenance reunification and the sense of impending bloc destabilization inherent within improved intra-German political relations, Bonn's ability to pursue both short or long-term Ostpolitik aims is indeed severely constrained. Yet the domestic demand to maintain the policy has remained strong, though much of the demand has been based on considerations other than reunification.

Unlike the US, which can periodically declare detente dead, the FRG cannot afford the luxury of "unpredictability" in its relations with the USSR. Pragmatism, not reunification, dictates that Ostpolitik remain on track. It is a sober awareness of preponderant Soviet military strength located on its border that demands maintenance of the Eastern connection. The need for predictability

reflects an awareness on the part of German leadership that Western policies toward the Soviet Union cannot produce a major change in the Eastern political system.



. . . The pursuit of predictability in Germany's East-West relations reflect [sic] less a policy of appeasement toward the Soviet Union than a pragmatic account taken of the realities of Soviet power, as well as of the vulnerabilities of West Europe in general and West Germany in particular. That these realities are more inescapable for Europeans than they are for Americans is a fact of geography and power; Europe and Germany need detente with the adjacent Soviet superpower more than does the more remote and powerful United States. [Ref. 100: p. 108]

Although determining either the point at which concern passes through deference to become anticipatory accommodation or the degree of self-interest prompting trade with the East is not the task at hand, these issues nonetheless provide recurrent points of criticism leveled at Bonn. Yet, as Christoph Bertram adds, "on the other hand, . . . the Federal Republic has become both too aware of its political and economic weight and too firmly rooted in the Western alliance to accept a status of subservience to Soviet demands." [Ref. 100: p. 108] Thus in spite of those charges, as well as that of pursuing its "private concern" vis-à-vis the GDR, Ostpolitik represents the only politically viable option available to Bonn. In this rather precarious situation, "the critical variables, now as throughout Germany's last decades, seem to be the nature and strength of Germany's American connection." [Ref. 101: p. 269]

US commitment to the status quo conflicts with that of the FRG. Both the FRG and the USSR accepted the present political solution in order to modify it in the long-term, with asymmetrical objectives. Washington, however, prefers



perpetuation of the existing structure, fearing the possible consequences of any tampering with a system that has satisfied its own political needs. The issue at stake is the debate between two forms of dynamism and the American preference for stability. "As the endless surges and recessions of power throughout history indicate, a fixed status quo is an absurdity because static." [Ref. 102: p. 358] By advocating maintenance of a restrictive structure that offers little scope for national growth or progress, the US risks slowly losing influence in the FRG in particular, and Western Europe in general. By striving to moderate the dynamic forces operant within all societies that tends toward the expression of national purposes, the US could conceivably place Bonn in the position of having to choose between domestic requirements for Ostpolitik and its own foreign policy preferences.

Since the Reagan-Kohl efforts to repair damaged US-West German relations, the US has returned to an anti-Soviet evaluation of the European, and hence also German, division. Mertes quotes two representative examples:

Secretary of State George Shultz: "Let me be very clear: The United States does not recognize the legitimacy of the artificially imposed division of Europe. This division is the essence of Europe's security and human rights problem, and we all know it." On the same subject, President Reagan stated on February 5, 1985: "There is one boundary which Yalta symbolizes that can never be made legitimate, and that is the dividing line between freedom and repression. I do not hesitate to say that we wish to undo this boundary. . . . protecting the

security of one nation by robbing another of its national independence and national traditions is not legitimate.

In the long run, it is not even secure." [Ref. 95: pp. 4-5]

US public endorsement of the traditional formula concerning the source of political instability in Europe is welcome in Bonn in that it creates the impression of US dedication to European unity and restored policy consensus within the Alliance. Realization, however, that similar rhetoric has previously served to mask status quo sentiments gives Bonn little reason to derive comfort from such statements.

In the final analysis, the FRG remains existentially dependent on the US nuclear guarantee for provision of its basic security requirements. Retention of that security source severely circumscribes the measure of political independence gained vis-a-vis both alliance blocs from Ostpolitik. Yet if the US

should demand that West Germany, in the interest of the alliance, sacrifice her ostpolitik (for example, because of Soviet policy in Poland), that she stop treating the Kremlin in a special way because it controls East Germany and the access to West Berlin, then nobody can foresee with certainty what this would mean for German domestic affairs. [Ref. 103: p. 183]

Berlin is the crucial focal point of West German foreign policy in that it "marks the limits of independence. It is here that the Soviets can apply pressure which only the Western alliance can effectively counter." [Ref. 104: p. 879] But contrary to Kennedy's assertion, Berlin is not necessarily safe.

VI. EUROPE'S FUTURES: AMERICAN TUTELEGE,  
WEST GERMAN ASCENDENCY, SOVIET HEGEMONY?

Detente has failed to resolve satisfactorily the German question due to the mutually exclusive goals pursued by (and differing interests involved for) the US, the USSR and the FRG. Although the policies of all three countries have been based on a certain acceptance of the present territorial status quo, each has perceived its significance as a politico-security structure differently. As a result of conflicting purposes, disparate means available by which to achieve them, and the contrasting ways in which the policies have been pursued, the detente period has set in motion trends that are of crucial importance for future developments in Europe, and especially Germany. The consequences of altered West German perceptions of the superpowers and of the Federal Republic's own role are, and will be, major factors in shaping the West German political environment. What the FRG conceives its role to be and how it evaluates US and Soviet intentions toward Germany itself are critical issues for European affairs.

A primary consequence of the detente period has been the large degree of success achieved by the Soviet "peace" campaign. Although aimed at all West European countries, the FRG, as noted earlier, was more susceptible to this propaganda program and objectively more important, and

consequently received a greater level of Soviet attention. Since many West Germans readily embraced "the academic prejudice to the effect that detente secures the peace while deterrence endangers it," [Ref. 105: p. 220] a mere fostering of widely held doubts about aggressive Soviet intentions would probably decrease public willingness to divert economic resources from social programs to defense requirements. By aligning itself with indigenous protest forces and playing upon West German fear of war, the Kremlin could present itself as a European ally equally concerned about the possible consequences of US unpredictability and dangerous "arms-racing".

This low-risk policy is a conservative and subtle Soviet method for resolving a thorny problem. Fomenting too rapid a destabilization could cause a nationalistic backlash in the FRG that would not be at all in Soviet interests. Considering its fearful respect for German ability and potential, the USSR may well prefer a gradual replacement of US influence on the continent with its own. In other words, a weak and generally ineffective US presence may be preferred to a united Western Europe that would almost certainly be led by the FRG, owing to its economic importance.

In claiming the need for arms control and the irreversibility of peaceful coexistence, while simultaneously amassing overwhelming conventional, chemical, and nuclear forces on the inter-German border, Moscow has created unprecedented



uncertainty about ultimate goals where previously a clear sense of danger had been perceived. Detente served as the ideal vehicle for this dual track policy.

Without detente, Soviet superiority or military pressure can encourage Atlantic unity or, if West Europeans perceive the Atlantic connection as unreliable or dangerous, drive the West European countries toward unity and an autonomous defense. Without Soviet superiority, detente can promote instability in Eastern Europe by raising East European expectations excessively and by increasing West European influence in that area. It is only the two together which maximize Soviet interests. That Moscow understands this point is demonstrated plainly by its campaign for "military detente." [Ref. 106: p. 47]

The fact that an enemy's hostile intent has become questioned at all indicates that the underlying premise of antagonism is no longer assumed.

By shifting the arena of East-West competition from explicit military confrontation to implicit psychological warfare, Soviet detente efforts in Europe have made great strides in the struggle for men's minds. In the absence of an alternative Western model for European development, that proffered by the USSR could conceivably be embraced through either default or gullibility. Although polarized political elements exist in all Western countries, the increasingly general West German sentiment favoring "peace at any price," the classic Soviet formulation of international relations under modern conditions, cannot be taken lightly. According to Schwarz, an eminent West German authority, "the detente of the 1970s is primarily defensive, interested in maintaining the status quo and already, within individual European



leftist parties, influenced by efforts to align with the new lord and master in consequence of the decline of American power." [Ref. 57: p. 294]

The formulation may not be so crudely phrased or even consciously admitted by the average West German, yet the popular conviction that war must be avoided at all costs equates to an attitude of accommodation, if not appeasement, of the USSR. Taken to its logical conclusion, the traditional assumption of a state's willingness to defend itself is no longer necessarily valid in the case of the FRG. Convinced that the stakes are too high to warrant the risk and having been persuaded prior to the initiation of any armed conflict that the results are irrevocably predetermined to their disadvantage, the FRG and other Western European countries could possibly adopt a self-deterrent posture, thus falling prey to a Soviet propaganda coup of immense proportions. If the principle that "war is the continuation of politics by other means" remains operant in the USSR, and the Soviets more and more successfully maneuver the West German populace into a belief in the Clausewitzian dictum that "in war only the defender is to blame", the implications for NATO are sobering. "The attacker always prefers to make his conquest peacefully. In practical terms it follows that a policy characterizing peace as the highest value must either regard armed forces as completely superfluous or have decided in advance to surrender in the face of adversity." [Ref. 28: p. 199]

Admittedly, the above describes an extreme situation and one cannot disregard Stent's assertion that "there is a limit to how far it [the USSR] can turn these Western quarrels to its own advantage. Disagreements with the United States do not automatically translate in most West European capitals into closer ties with the Soviet Union." [Ref. 34: p. 103] Nonetheless, it is difficult, given the growth of antinuclear feelings, the degree of Alliance discord and the Soviet assault on national volition, to endorse that author's optimistic conclusion: "Opportunities to divide and influence Western Europe will remain, but the Soviet Union will come no nearer to controlling Western Europe than it does now." [Ref. 34: p. 104] Lack of self-determination can appear in many guises, as West Germans well know.

The US has offered the FRG no alternative to a static, defensive status quo with no possibility of change for the future. Although the West Germans do not desire a Soviet hegemonic security system, Soviet plans do reflect an affinity to the element of restless dynamism within West German society that the present structural system suppresses. Change itself, if not necessarily any government's preferred outcome, is inevitable, and part of the West German dissatisfaction with the current static situation stems from what is perceived as US mismanagement of Alliance affairs.

If the West German image of the USSR has mellowed, that of the US has lost its luster. As a result of the US generally neglecting European detente and tactlessly exacerbating US-West German detente differences during the Carter (and to a lesser degree during the first Reagan) Administration, the FRG has severely questioned US leadership capability. Carter's human rights program, for example, was seen by most West Germans as a counter-productive attempt to somehow refashion Soviet society. This approach clashed violently with Schmidt's policy of quiet diplomacy aimed at securing tangible results. The difference of approach also highlighted conflicting detente expectations: conversion versus convergence. The extremes of US leadership styles and political platforms, and the rapid transitions between them, resulted in inconsistent policies and the general perception of unpredictability in Western Europe. The West European response to the vagaries of the American political system has been a modest but growing impetus toward unity, with West German sponsorship. As a consequence of its detente performance, the US must now face the possibility of its long-espoused vision of a more self-reliant Western Europe actually becoming reality.

As has been evident in the reaction to President Reagan's Strategic Defense Initiative, Western Europe appears more determined than in the past to develop a common continental front within the Alliance. The US has

verbally supported West European political integration throughout the postwar period. Concepts of equality and partnership have characterized the US view of the desired relationship with its NATO allies. Yet the US perception of an economically recovered Europe as unwelcome competition sparked a reaction marked by nationalistic self-interest. Behind all the talk of equality the unspoken assumption of superiority has remained intact. Should the US transfer that attitude and type of behavior to the political realm, the effect upon Alliance unity could prove disastrous.

If Western Europe were to act upon US importuning to attain a greater "maturity" in its transatlantic relationship by bearing a correspondingly greater share of the burden of responsibility for Alliance affairs, Western Europe would challenge the sincerity of American declaratory policy. The FRG has already been in the position of acceding to US policy preferences (by initiating Ostpolitik) only to later discover that Washington intended to retain final approving authority for policy implementation. To avoid a recurrence of that experience, the US must itself decide whether to accept graciously a certain diminishing of its own influence within the Alliance or continue with the damaging precedent of proclaiming partnership while practicing paternalism.

Although the West European, and especially West German, dependence on the US nuclear guarantee remains, the present political and economic relationships within the Alliance no



longer reflect the conditions of the 1950s. US leadership is still necessary, but greater diplomatic skills and a higher tolerance for allied pursuit of regional policies are also required. The tutelege model has become obsolescent and threatens to inhibit the development of a more mutually beneficial relationship.

The US must take into account the consequences of its success, i.e. of having prompted greater European political integration and self-confidence, and react to it favorably or risk facing the temptation to try to sabotage the very process it itself instigated in order to remain predominant. If Washington were to succumb to the latter option, it would actually effect a merger of US and Soviet policies as regards strategic goals and tactics employed: the prevention of West European unity through the exploitation of "internal contradictions". Only the USSR would gain from a situation of US alienation from its European allies. In its search for a balance between protecting European political stability (territorial status quo considerations) and fashioning a more flexible intra-Alliance relationship (dynamic factors), the US must allow the FRG latitude in Ostpolitik options.

The German question remains unsettled from Bonn's perspective and cannot be separated from the larger question of a future European settlement. US-Soviet detente served to remove those issues as an official item on the superpower political agenda, yet the countries most aggrieved by the



status quo, the FRG and Eastern Europe, consider the matter still open. [Ref. 18: p. 3] Until a political structure is formed that lends a sense of national identity and provides scope for creative action, Central Europe must remain a collection of disaffected states searching for adequate international self-expression.

The centuries-old problem of German identity reappears as an unresolved issue of key importance. Buzan's "part-nation-state" model pointedly summarizes the nature of the continuing crisis:

The mystique of the unified nation-state frequently exercises a strong hold on part-nation-states, and can easily become an obsessive and overriding security issue. Rival part-nation-states like East and West Germany . . . almost automatically undermine each other's legitimacy, and the imperative for reunification is widely assumed to be an immutable factor that will re-emerge whenever opportunity beckons. . . . Part-nation-states, then, can represent a severe source of insecurity both to themselves and to others. Their case offers the maximum level of contradiction in the idea of national security as applied to states, for it is precisely the nation that makes the idea of the state insecure. (Emphasis added) [Ref. 107: pp. 47-48]

Eastern and Western assumptions of an innate drive to reunification predispose both blocs to discredit Bonn's denials of revisionism. West German hopes for an eventual convergence of the two German states depend upon the strength of the appeal to nationhood. Ironically, the FRG's very existence and the bond of historical-cultural tradition prevent Bonn credibly assuring the SED regime of its position in power, a crucial criterion of the Brandt/Bahr program for

progressing toward convergence. Taken to its logical conclusion, only de jure recognition of the GDR could theoretically satisfy the SED security requirement necessary for the blossoming of "fruitful coexistence". Assuring the SED of its uncontested continued tenure in power would not, however, necessarily release that regime from its Existenzangst.

Bonn would be deluding itself if it thought it could achieve a meaningful and closer relationship with East Berlin by surrendering its only real political bargaining chip. An influx of Western visitors and ideas would be no less threatening to SED legitimacy after de jure recognition than before. Also, with the avidly desired prize in hand, the SED would perceive no need to cooperate with Bonn except as required by its own financial difficulties. By having played its final card, all initiative would have been lost by the FRG. Only through political use of the economic instrument could Bonn even attempt to influence the further development of Ostpolitik.

Additionally, although recognition by the West German bête noire could prove ideologically uncomfortable domestically, the SED has shown itself creatively resourceful in maligning the FRG's policies no matter what the financial gain they provided. All Communist regimes quite simply need enemies to justify their own existence, and the SED especially needs the FRG in that role. De jure recognition would not affect the requirement for that survival mechanism.

At the same time, however, the status of "foreign country" could also be comforting to the SED, which could then tell its people that their fate is sealed. This could immeasurably assist the SED in managing its potentially destabilizing problem of internal legitimacy. In view of all these factors it is difficult to conceive of improved intra-German relations on the basis of the Brandt/Bahr concepts.

Yet another argument for keeping the German question open is Tucker's contention that the long-term prospects for success of the communist part of the divided nation decrease to the extent that the non-communist unit is non-repressive. [Ref. 108: p. 244] Viewed from this perspective, the FRG could most effectively achieve its Ostpolitik goals by merely offering a more attractive alternative to the SED state. A major difficulty for Bonn, however, will be negotiating a course between superpower constraints.

Although this would be an unintended consequence, the FRG may find itself forced into a Schaukelpolitik between Washington and Moscow.

Diplomatically, the Federal Republic might be caught in a position which it has compulsively shunned from the day of its inception in 1949--courted in the East and in the West and suspected by both. Bonn would be confronted with an impossible task: how to protect its "special detente" with the East against the global freeze, while safeguarding its older and far more vital ties to the West. [Ref. 81: p. 209]

Bonn faces the unenviable task of balancing interests in several dimensions: domestic versus foreign, East versus West, and European versus American. Many of the FRG's options will depend upon how the US and the USSR manage their West German policies. Moscow could destroy, for instance, its own carefully groomed "peace" image, prompting Bonn to strengthen its NATO ties. Washington, on the other hand, could prove obstructionist regarding Ostpolitik and drive the FRG into greater accommodation with the USSR. Should neither superpower adopt an extreme position and the present West European integrative trend continue, Bonn would find itself in a position of leadership, a role for which it is not yet prepared.

Even though it has not actively sought regional predominance, the FRG's economic and military (in conventional terms) strength has guaranteed its political ascendancy. The Brandt/Bahr claim to a special West German mission within Western detente toward overcoming the continental division could find its incipient fulfillment in West European unity. In line with that, Hahn warns of "a German propensity to overestimate their own ability to shape, manage and exploit their political environment on the Continent." [Ref. 53: p. 880] West German leadership on the continent would test that maturity of which Brandt spoke. Allowing the FRG to assume that responsibility would test that same quality among NATO members. In the

interest of Alliance preservation one would do well to remember Joffe's warning: Germany only looks to the East when humiliated or deserted by the West. [Ref. 3: p. 721]



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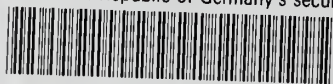
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